MEDICINE LODGE

PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
and
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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MEDICINE LODGE PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

AND

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

FINAL

Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, Clark, Fremont, Jefferson,
Madison, and Teton Counties
State of Idaho

Prepared by

Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

Idaho Falls District

Clair M Whitlock
State Director, Idaho

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Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan
and
Environmental Impact Statement

( ) Draft (X) Final

Lead Agency

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management

Type of Action

(X) Administrative ( ) Legislative

Abstract

This resource management plan and environmental impact statement describes and analyzes five alternative plans for managing 647,719 acres of BLM-administered land and 140,415 acres within the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area of the Idaho Falls District. In addition to the lands within the Medicine Lodge Resource Area, grazing will be analyzed on 72,053 acres of the Twin Buttes Allotment in the Big Butte Resource Area. Alternative A would continue present management. Alternative B would emphasize increases in commodity production, consumptive uses and more intensive development. Alternative C, the Proposed Plan, would allow production and use of commodity resources while protecting natural systems for nonconsumptive resource uses. Alternative D recommends part of two WSAs for wilderness designation and is similar to Alternative C. Alternative E recommends wilderness designation for two WSAs, favors habitat management to increase wildlife populations, and increases protection of cultural resources and opportunities for general recreation.

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* (Maps 3a and 3b are located in a map pocket at the back of this document).

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED PLAN AND ALTERNATIVES

The Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan (RMP) was prepared to provide the Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Falls District Office, with a comprehensive framework for managing 647,719 acres of BLM-administered public land over the next 10 or more years. With increasing demands for various resources, prudent stewardship of the public lands can no longer be accomplished without comprehensive land use planning.

The Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS published September 1984 was divided into 3 parts.

Part I of that document was the draft plan for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area, Idaho Falls District (see Map 1 for location.)

Part II of that document was the environmental impact statement portion that deals with the expected environmental impacts associated with several alternatives. Each alternative represented a possible plan for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. Alternative C was the preferred alternative and was the same as the draft plan (Part I).

Part III, Appendix, consisted of specific data on which Part I and Part II were based. More detailed information is available for inspection at the Idaho Falls District Office.

This Proposed Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement uses an abbreviated format. The BLM considered all of the comments received by letter and at two hearings (refer to Public Comment and Review). After a thorough review of the Draft and an analysis of all of the comments BLM has chosen to adopt Alternative C, with some minor additions and corrections, as the proposed plan for the area. Alternative C was identified in the Draft RMP/EIS as BLM's Preferred Alternative. Table 1 shows outputs or actions for all of the alternatives analyzed and a narrative summary follows.

Wilderness Recommendations

Wilderness recommendations for the Sand Mountain and Snake River Islands WSAs are not included in this proposed plan. They are being considered further along with the wilderness specific comments that were received on the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. After a review of the comments and wilderness suitability analysis, a Final Medicine Lodge Wilderness EIS will be prepared along with Wilderness Study Reports for each WSA. These documents will include the final wilderness recommendations from the Secretary of the Interior to the President and Congress.

Only Congress can designate an area of public land as wilderness. BLM recommends areas suitable or nonsuitable for wilderness preservation through the Secretary of the Interior. Those recommendations are preliminary, and are subject to change by the Secretary and the President before they are submitted to Congress.

Until Congress acts on the President's recommendations, BLM will manage all WSAs -- whether they have been recommended wilderness or not -- under the Interim Wilderness Management Policy. This policy provides protective management for all WSAs throughout the various review steps.

After Congress acts, a different management policy will apply, depending on whether or not Congress designates an area wilderness. Areas designated will be managed under BLM's Wilderness Management Policy. Specific management provisions will be formulated in a wilderness management plan developed for each area following designation. WSAs not designated will be managed for other purposes, according to management prescriptions listed for Management Areas 6 and 8.

Issues

The following planning issues were identified through public participation for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. The issues presented here are those that received major emphasis in the public responses and ones that need a land use decision in the resource management plan.

Public Land Transfer

1. What public lands should be transferred out of public ownership or consolidated with other public lands?
2. Which public lands have agricultural potential?
3. What should be done with isolated tracts and omitted lands?

Mineral and Energy Exploration and Development

1. Should some public lands be closed to mineral leasing?
2. Should any areas be withdrawn from mineral entry?
3. What special conditions should be placed on mineral exploration and development?

Timber Resource Utilization

1. Should any areas be closed to timber harvesting?
2. Should restrictions be placed on timber harvesting?

Livestock Use

1. How should the range resource be managed to meet existing and future livestock demand?
2. How much forage should be designated for livestock use?
3. What special conditions should be placed on livestock grazing?

Wildlife Use

1. How should the range resource be managed to meet existing and future wildlife demand?
2. How much forage should be designated for wildlife use?

Recreation and ORV Use

1. What areas should be designated as open, closed or limited to motorized vehicles?
2. What areas should be developed as recreation sites?
3. Should the South Fork of the Snake River receive special designation as a scenic or recreational river?

Wilderness Designation

1. Which areas should be recommended for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System?
2. If not recommended and designated as wilderness, how will the Wilderness Study Areas be managed?

Water and Water Quality

1. Which riparian areas need to be improved in the area and which maintained?
2. How should the public lands be managed to compliment the Willow Creek 208 Project?

Fire Management

1. What areas should be designated for full suppression, limited suppression, suppression with restrictions, and prescribed burns?
2. What restrictions are needed in fire suppression to protect sensitive resource values?

Five alternatives were analyzed in the Medicine Lodge RMP. These alternatives comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and at the same time address the issues identified in the area. Two alternatives considered but not developed for the RMP were a Maximum Grazing Alternative and a No Grazing Alternative. The alternatives, general guidelines for developing alternatives, key management actions and a brief summary of alternatives are discussed below.

ALTERNATIVE A

This alternative represents the existing situation and serves as the baseline for analyzing other alternatives. The present level of management on the public lands would be continued while measures would be taken to prevent or correct deteriorating conditions. Any changes in management would be brought about through monitoring and the environmental analysis process. All actions would be handled on a case by case basis.

No wilderness study areas would be recommended for wilderness designation. Those areas not recommended for wilderness designation would be managed for other multiple use values.

As defined by BLM policy, Alternative A is the proposed action for livestock grazing. However, Alternative C has been selected as the proposed plan.

Management Action Summary

Transfer areas of about 540 acres would be transferred from public ownership by sale or exchange. An additional 1,475 acres of public land have Desert Land Entry applications filed on them which would be examined and processed using the standard operating procedures.

A total of 408,100 acres would be open to fluid mineral leasing with standard stipulations, 320,920 acres with seasonal occupancy restrictions and 65,630 acres under no surface occupancy restrictions. There would be 135,380 acres closed to soild and fluid mineral leasing. A total of 794,410 acres would be open to locatable mineral entry and 135,620 acres closed to protect other resource values. A total of 797,540 acres would be open to mineral material sales and 132,490 acres closed. Approximately 14,114 acres of public forest land would be open to commercial harvest under existing regulations, restrictions and stipulations. Under this alternative, 12,773 acres of woodland would be available for selective management.

This alternative would provide 88,302 AUMs of livestock forage. Approximately 620,539 acres of public land and 180,419 acres within the INEL boundary would be included in grazing allotments. The objective for Alternative A would be to maintain existing livestock use. No range improvements are proposed for this alternative. A stocking level of 88,302 AUMs was established for Alternative A even though the present active preference is 103,281 AUMs.

The Sands Habitat Management Plan includes 208,532 acres of public lands and would continue to be implemented and the objectives stated in the plan would be followed. In addition, the guidelines established by the Memorandum of Understanding for the South Fork of the Snake River and the Tex Creek Cooperative Agreement with the Idaho Fish and Game would be followed. There are 35,865 AUMs of wildlife forage identified under this alternative to satisfy existing demands.

Approximately 53 miles of stream would be managed to maintain existing fisheries, water quality and riparian habitat in current satisfactory condition. Public land within the SCS Willow Creek 208 project would be managed in accordance with that watershed protection plan.

Under this alternative, 1,120 acres would remain closed to ORV use on North Menan Butte and 21,580 acres in the Sand Mountain and Stinking Springs area would continue to have seasonal closures to protect big game wintering areas. The National Natural Landmark designation would remain on the 1,120 acres of Menan Butte.

The wilderness recommendation is nonsuitable under this alternative for both WSAs. The areas would be managed under the Interim Management Policy until Congress acts.

All areas would be considered as full fire suppression. Prescribed burning would occur on approximately 15,760 acres, of which 50% would be burned.

Environmental Consequences Summary

In Alternative A there would be a minor decrease in the acres of land retained in public ownership. The acres of land available for minerals management would remain the same. There would be a minor decrease in the amount of forest land available for harvest. Ecological range condition would remain basically the same with a slight increase in livestock AUMs. There would be no change in wildlife habitat condition and forage would be available for existing numbers. Water quality would continue to decrease in areas currently in a downward trend. Recreation opportunities would remain the same.

ALTERNATIVE B

This alternative would favor production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorizations. Management direction would favor higher livestock stocking levels, more range improvements, land disposal for agricultural development, and transfer of isolated or difficult to manage parcels out of federal ownership. Restrictions on mining, mineral leasing, mineral material removal, and off-road vehicle use would be minimized.

Management Action Summary

Approximately 25,466 acres would be available for transfer from federal ownership through sale, exchange or agricultural entry.

A total of 566,440 acres would be open to fluid mineral leasing with standard stipulations, 308,520 acres with seasonal occupancy restrictions, and 27,170 acres under no surface occupancy restrictions. Only 27,900 acres would be closed to mineral leasing. This alternative includes opening about 106,840 acres of the INEL to mineral leasing. Areas open to locatable mineral entry total 795,390 acres. Areas closed total 134,640 acres. A total of 915,510 acres would be open to sales of mineral materials and only 14,520 acres would be closed to protect other resource values.

Approximately 13,324 acres of public forest land would be open to commercial harvest under existing regulations, restricitons and stipulations under this alternative. Another 569 acres would be lost through transfer actions. Under this alternative, 12,638 acres of woodland would be available for selective management. One hundred thirty five acres of woodlands would be withdrawn from harvest around existing bald eagle nesting sites.

Livestock management would provide 108,835 AUMs of livestock forage. Approximately 620,539 acres of public land and 180,419 acres within the INEL boundary would be included in grazing allotments. The objective of Alternative B would be to maintain or improve existing perennial forage plants, maintain soil stability, stabilize areas currently in downward trend, and increase availability of perennial forage plants.

The Sands Habitat Management Plan would continue to be used and updated. A total of 24,601 AUMs of wildlife forage would be allowed under this alternative. An HMP would be developed for the Edie Creek Bench area covering 11,500 acres. The Tex Creek Cooperative Agreement and the South Fork MOU would continue to be followed.

Under Alternative B 23.9 miles of stream would be managed primarily for riparian, fisheries or water quality improvement and protection. Approximately 53 miles of stream would be managed to maintain existing fisheries, water quality and riparian habitat in current satisfactory condition. Public lands within the SCS Willow Creek 208 project would be managed in cooperation with other land owners to implement the watershed protection plan.

Under this alternative, 1,120 acres would remain closed to ORV use on North Menan Butte. An additional 21,580 acres in the Sand Mountain and Stinking Springs areas would continue to have a seasonal closure to protect big game wintering areas and minimize soil erosion.

The National Natural Landmark designation would be maintained on Menan Butte. In addition, Special Recreation Management Designations would be applied to the Sands, Juniper Mountain area and to the Snake River. The Cress Creek Trail has been nominated as a National Recreation Trail.

The two WSAs, totaling 21,870 acres, would be recommended as nonsuitable. These areas would be managed under the Interim Management Policy until Congress makes final determination.

Approximately 648,719 acres would be provided full fire suppression under Alternative B. In addition, 164,328 acres would be considered for prescribed burning.

Environmental Consequences

With the increase in lands available for transfer from federal ownership, the amount of lands retained would decrease. There would be a major increase in the amount of land available for leaseable energy and minerals. Commercial forest land available for management would decrease due to land transfer

actions. Range condition would improve due to vegetation manipulation and improved management. Livestock AUMs would show an increase. Wildlife habitat would show a decrease in condition and forage available to wildlife would be less. There would be a decrease in water quality, fisheries and riparian condition. Developed recreation opportunities would increase. The social and economic conditions would show an increase for the area.

ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED PLAN)

This is BLM's Proposed Plan for the resource area. a complete description of the plan appears in the section entitled Proposed Management Area Decisions in this document. A variety of resource uses would occur. Production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorizations would occur, while protecting fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preserving natural systems and cultural values and allowing for nonconsumptive resource uses. A balanced approach to multiple use would be achieved. Resource use levels would be within the range of Alternatives B and E.

Management Actions

Approximately 8,249 acres of public land would be available for transfer from federal ownership by sale, exchange or agricultural entry.

A total of 515,040 acres would be open to fluid mineral leasing with standard stipulations, 341,820 acres with seasonal occupancy restrictions and 44,870 acres under no surface occupancy restrictions. Only 28,300 acres would be closed to mineral leasing and 857 acres closed to solid mineral leasing. This alternative would include opening about 106,840 acres of the INEL to mineral leasing. Areas open to locatable mineral entry total 786,673 acres and there would be 143,357 acres closed. A total of 869,960 acres would be open to sale of mineral materials and 60,070 acres would be closed to protect other resource values.

There would be 11,330 acres of public land open to commercial timber harvest under existing regulations, restrictions and stipulations under the proposed plan. Deferred from harvest would be 1,966 acres, predominately in the Box Canyon Area north of Ashton, which are uneconomical or not feasible to cut at this time. There would be 296 acres withdrawn from timber harvest because of slope, soils or inability of the site to reproduce timber. An additional 818 acres would be withdrawn from harvest because of protection of other resource values or the acreage would be lost through transfer actions. There would be 2,925 acres of woodland along the South Fork of the Snake River withdrawn from harvesting.

The proposed plan would provide 100,449 AUMs of livestock forage. Approximately 620,539 acres of public land and 180,419 acres within the INEL boundary would be included in grazing allotments. The objective of this alternative would be to maintain or improve existing perennial forage plants, maintain soil stability, stabilize areas currently in downward trend, and increase availability of perennial forage plants.

The Sands Habitat Management Plan (HMP) would continue to be used and updated as needed. A total of 49,163 AUMs of forage would be provided. This would provide forage for expected herd numbers over the next 20 years. The Tex Creek Cooperative Agreement and the South Fork of the Snake River MOU with the Idaho Fish and Game would continue to be followed. A management plan for the South Fork of the Snake River would be developed. Wildlife values will be one of the key resources planned for in that area.

In the proposed plan, 30.5 miles of stream would be managed primarily for riparian, fisheries and/or water quality improvement and protection. This would require 13.6 miles of fence to be built to protect 6.8 miles of stream. Another 53 miles of stream would be managed to maintain existing fisheries, water quality and riparian habitat in current satisfactory condition. Public lands within the SCS Willow Creek 208 Watershed Project area would be managed in cooperation with other land owners and agencies to implement the watershed protection plan.

Off-road vehicle closures would be imposed on 18,907 acres in Alternative C. An additional 69,400 acres would have seasonal closures to ORV use and 27,889 acres would have vehicle restrictions to existing roads and trails. The remaining 601,923 acres would be open to off-road vehicle use. The National Natural Landmark designation would be maintained on 1,120 acres on North Menan Butte and recommended on 27,350 acres of the St. Anthony Sand Dunes. Three areas would be nominated for designation as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. A Special Recreation Management Area designation would be applied to the Sand Dunes complex and also the Snake River. Research Natural Area designations would be made on North Menan Butte, Game Creek, the North Junipers and on three islands of the Snake River. The Cress Creek Trail would be nominated as a National Recreation Trail.

The 21,870 acres in the two Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) would be recommended as nonsuitable. These areas would be managed under the Interim Management Policy until Congress makes final determination.

Approximately 429,301 acres would be provided full fire suppression. The remaining 217,196 acres would be included in a limited suppression plan. Included are 51,505 acres that would be considered for prescribed burning over the next 20 years.

Environmental Consequences

There would be a modest increase in public lands made available for transfer which could cause a decrease in public land acres retained. The amount of land available for leasable and salable minerals would show major increase while lands available to locatable mineral entry will show a minor decrease. Commercial forest land available for harvest would be slightly less due to withdrawal for threatened and endangered species and critical wildlife habitat. Ecological range condition would improve and the amount of livestock AUMs would show a slight increase. Wildlife habitat condition and forage availability would show an overall increase under this alternative. Water quality, fisheries and riparian condition would improve due to proposed management. Recreation opportunities would increase over the existing situation. The social and economic conditions would improve over the existing situation.

ALTERNATIVE D

The partial wilderness alternative considers part of the Sand Mountain and Snake River Islands WSAs as potential wilderness. All use levels, except for Wilderness, Energy and Minerals and Lands, would remain the same as for Alternative C, the preferred Alternative.

Management Actions

Transfer of 680 acres would be by exchange or sale. Another 1,475 acres have been applied for through Desert Land Entry and would be handled under the standard operating procedures.

A total of 515,040 acres would be open to fluid mineral leasing with standard stipulations, 330,860 acres would have seasonal restrictions and 49,131 acres would be open to leasing under no surface occupancy restrictions. A total of 34,999 acres would be closed to fluid mineral leasing, with 857 more acres closed to solid mineral leasing. This alternative would include opening the 106,040 acres of the INEL to mineral leasing. Areas open to locatable mineral entry would total 776,113 acres and 153,917 acres would be closed. A total of 858,600 acres would be open for the sale of mineral materials and 71,430 acres would be closed to mineral materials use to protect other resource values.

A total of 6,715 acres would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 15,155 acres would be recommended as nonsuitable. These areas would be managed under the Interim Management Policy until Congress makes final determination.

All other management actions would be the same as Alternative C.

Environmental Consequences

The environmental consequences for Alternative D would be the same as for Alternative C except that less land would be transferred from public ownership. Wildlife habitat would be provided better protection. Additional acreage would be added to the Wilderness Preservation System. Social and economic conditions would show a slight improvement over the existing situation.

ALTERNATIVE E

In this alternative, protection of fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preservation of natural systems and nonconsumptive resource uses would be favored. Management direction would favor habitat management to increase wildlife populations, protection of wilderness qualities and opportunities for general dispersed recreation.

Management Actions

There would be no lands identified for transfer from public ownership in this alternative. The 648,719 acres of public land would be retained.

A total of 389,400 acres would be open to fluid mineral leasing with standard stipulations. Another 319,720 acres would be open to leasing under seasonal occupancy restrictions and 62,770 acres with no surface occupancy. A total of 158,140 acres would be closed to fluid mineral leasing, with 857 acres more closed to mineral leasing. This alternative would leave all of the INEL closed to leasing. Areas open to locatable mineral entry total 750,653 acres and there would 179,377 acres closed. A total of 759,740 acres would be open to the sale of mineral materials and 170,290 acres would be closed to salable minerals use to protect other resource values.

There would be 9,204 acres of public land open to commercial timber harvest under existing regulations, restrictions and stipulations in this alternative. Deferred from harvest because they are uneconomical to cut or are not feasible to cut at this time are 1,966 acres. There would be 296 acres withdrawn from timber harvest because of slope, soils or inability of the site to reproduce timber. An additional 1,981 acres would be withdrawn from harvest because of the need to protect other resource values. A total of 1,259 acres of commercial timber would also receive special restrictions. Along the South Fork of the Snake River 2,925 acres of woodland would be withdrawn from woodland management. The remaining 9,848 acres of woodland would be open to selective management.

This alternative would provide 84,638 AUMs of livestock forage. Approximately 620,539 acres of public land and 180,419 acres within the INEL boundary would be included in grazing allotments. The objective of Alternative E would be to maintain existing perennial forage plants, maintain soil stability and stabilize areas currently in downward trend.

The Sands Habitat Management Plan (HMP) would continue to be used and updated as needed. A total of 55,000 AUMs of forage would be allowed for wildlife in the resource area. This would provide forage for the expected expansion of herd numbers over the next 20 years. An HMP would be developed for the Medicine Lodge area covering 168,678 acres. The Tex Creek Cooperative Agreement and South Fork MOU with Idaho Fish and Game would continue to be followed.

Under Alternative E, 32.3 miles of stream would be managed primarily for riparian, fisheries and/or water quality improvement and protection. This would require 28.3 miles of fence to be constructed to protect 13.5 miles of stream. Another 53 miles of stream would be managed to maintain existing fisheries, water quality and riparian habitat in current satisfactory condition.

Off-road vehicle closures would be imposed on 43,007 acres. An additional 53,600 acres would have seasonal closures to ORV use and 12,479 acres would have vehicle restricitons to existing roads and trails. The remaining 593,233 acres would be open to off-road vehicle use.

Under this alternative, all of both WSAs would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. Management emphasis would favor protection of fragile resources, wildlife habitat and natural systems and encourage nonconsumptive resource uses.

Cultural resources would be managed to reduce vandalism and nonpermitted artifact removal and gradually encourage scientific archaeological research.

Approximately 648,719 acres would be provided full fire protection. There would be 25,720 acres considered for prescribed burning over the next 20 years.

Environmental Consequences

There would be no change in the acres retained in public ownership over the existing situation. Lands available for mineral leasing under standard stipulations would show a major decrease while lands closed to leasing would increase. Commercial forest land available for harvest would decrease. Ecological range condition would increase slightly while livestock AUMs would decrease. Wildlife habitat condition and available wildlife AUMs would increase. Water quality, fisheries and riparian habitat would improve in condition. Recreation opportunities would not change from the existing situation. Acreage would be added to the Wilderness Preservation System. Social and economic conditions in the area would decrease slightly over the existing situation.

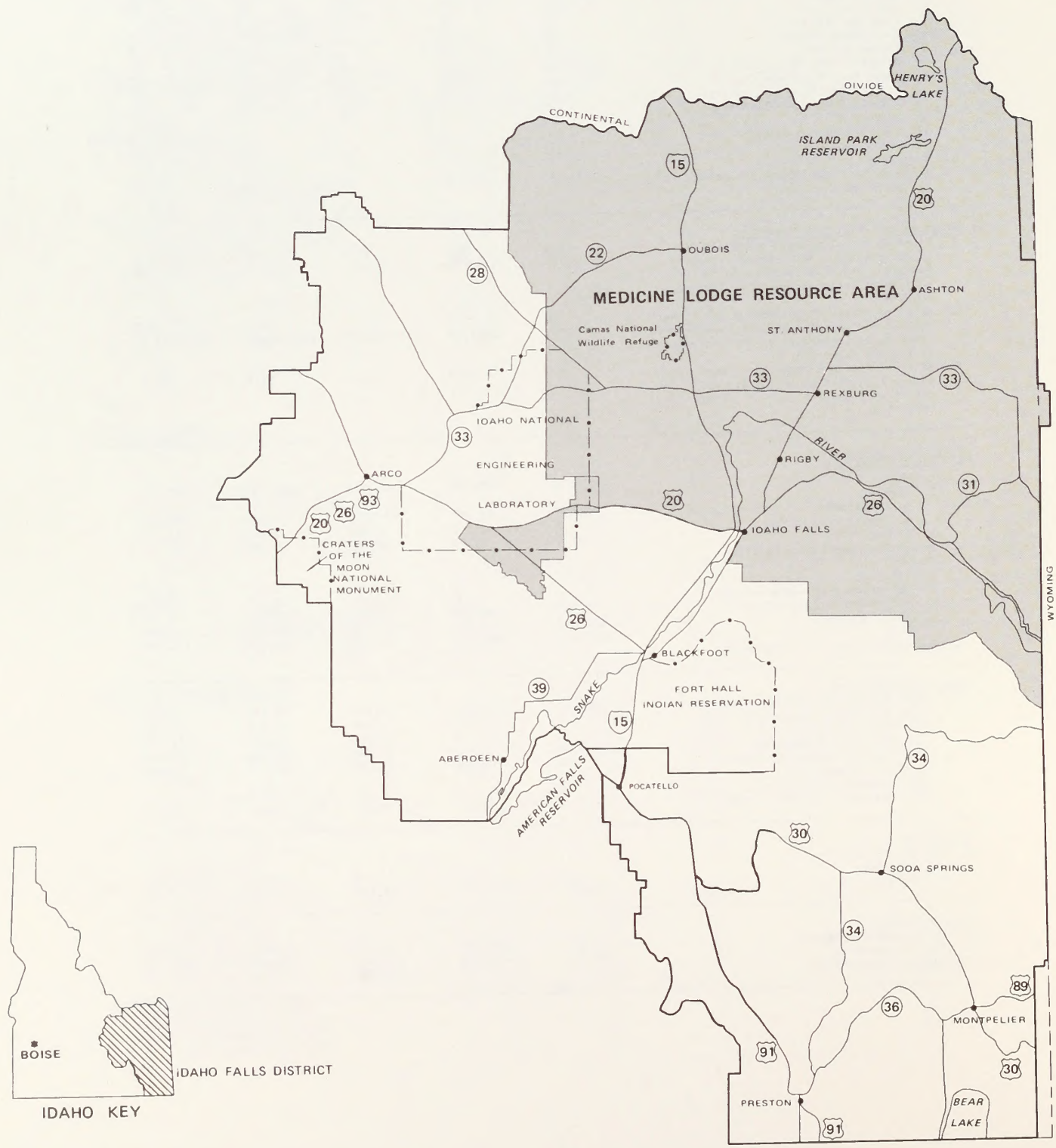
TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

Management Objective/Action	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Multiple Use and Transfer Areas (Acres)					
A. Limited	168,515	147,215	188,314	187,352	194,323
B. Moderate	618,604	616,453	592,571	599,707	594,811
C. Transfer	2,015	25,466	8,249	2,075	0
Lands and Realty Transactions					
A. Transfer Areas	540	12,586	5,574	680	0
1. Transfer (sales, pvt./state exchng.)					
2. Agricultural Entry (acres)					
a. Desert Land Entry App.	1,475	1,475	1,475	1,395	0
b. Soils Potential (acres)	0	11,405	1,200	0	0
B. Retain in Public Ownership	646,704	623,253	640,470	646,644	648,719
C. Idaho National Engineering Laboratory	140,415	140,415	140,415	140,415	140,415
Minerals Management					
A. Leasable Minerals					
1. Acres open to leasing under standard stipulations.	408,100	566,440	515,040	515,040	389,400
2. Acres open to leasing under seasonal occupancy restrictions.	320,920	308,520	341,820	330,860	319,720
3. Acres open to leasing under no surface occupancy restrictions.	65,630	27,170	44,870	49,131	62,770
4. Acres closed to leasing.	135,380	27,900	28,300	34,999	158,140
B. Locatable Minerals					
1. Acres open to claim location.	794,410	795,390	786,673	776,113	750,653
2. Acres closed to claim location	135,620	134,640	143,357	153,917	179,377
C. Salable Minerals					
1. Acres open to mineral materials use.	797,540	915,510	869,960	858,600	759,740
2. Acres closed to mineral materials use.	132,490	14,520	60,070	71,430	170,290
Forest Management					
A. Commercial Forest Land					
1. Deferred	0	0	1,966	1,966	1,966
2. Withdrawn Commercial Forest Land					
a. TPCC	296	296	296	296	296
b. T&E, Multiple Use	0	790	818	818	1,685
3. Restricted Commercial Forest Land					
a. Clear cut	0	0	0	0	0
b. Select cut	0	0	0	0	1,259
4. Available Commercial Forest Without Restrictions					
a. Clear cut	5,004	4,610	4,678	4,678	4,883
b. Select cut	9,110	8,714	6,652	6,652	4,321
B. Woodland					
1. Withdrawn From Timber Management	0	135	2,925	2,925	2,925
2. Timber Management Restricted	0	0	0	0	0
3. Available for Timber Management	12,773	12,638	9,848	9,848	9,848
Livestock Grazing Management					
A. Areas of Use By Livestock					
1. Available Acres	620,539	620,539	620,539	620,539	620,539
2. Closed	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
3. Restricted (acres)	13,284	13,284	13,284	13,284	13,284
4. Unleased or Unpermitted Acres	39,352	39,352	39,352	39,352	39,352
B. Stocking Levels (AUMs)					
1. Initial (end of 5 years)	88,302	108,835	100,449	100,449	84,638
2. % change from existing use	0	+23%	+14%	+14%	-04%
3. Future (end of 20 years)	88,851	127,423	107,249	107,249	71,930
4. % change from existing use	+0.5%	+44%	+21%	+21%	-19%
C. Vegetative Community					
Acres of poor and fair condition improved.	5,260	196,463	87,780	87,780	39,300
D. Range Improvements					
1. Brush Control (acres)	5,260	164,378	70,005	70,005	25,720
2. Seeding (acres)	0	26,995	10,075	10,075	780
3. Springs (each)	0	25	20	20	22
4. Wells (each)	0	63	36	36	2
5. Pipelines (miles)	0	46	25	25	8
6. Reservoirs (each)	0	80	34	34	18
7. Fences (miles)	0	137	115	115	6
8. Total Cost	$11,800	$2,700,000	$1,400,000	$1,400,000	$400,000
E. Allotment Categorization					
1. # of Maintain Allot. (M)	154	154	154	154	154
2. # of Improve Allot. (I)	87	87	87	87	87
3. # of Custodial Allot. (C)	28	28	28	28	28

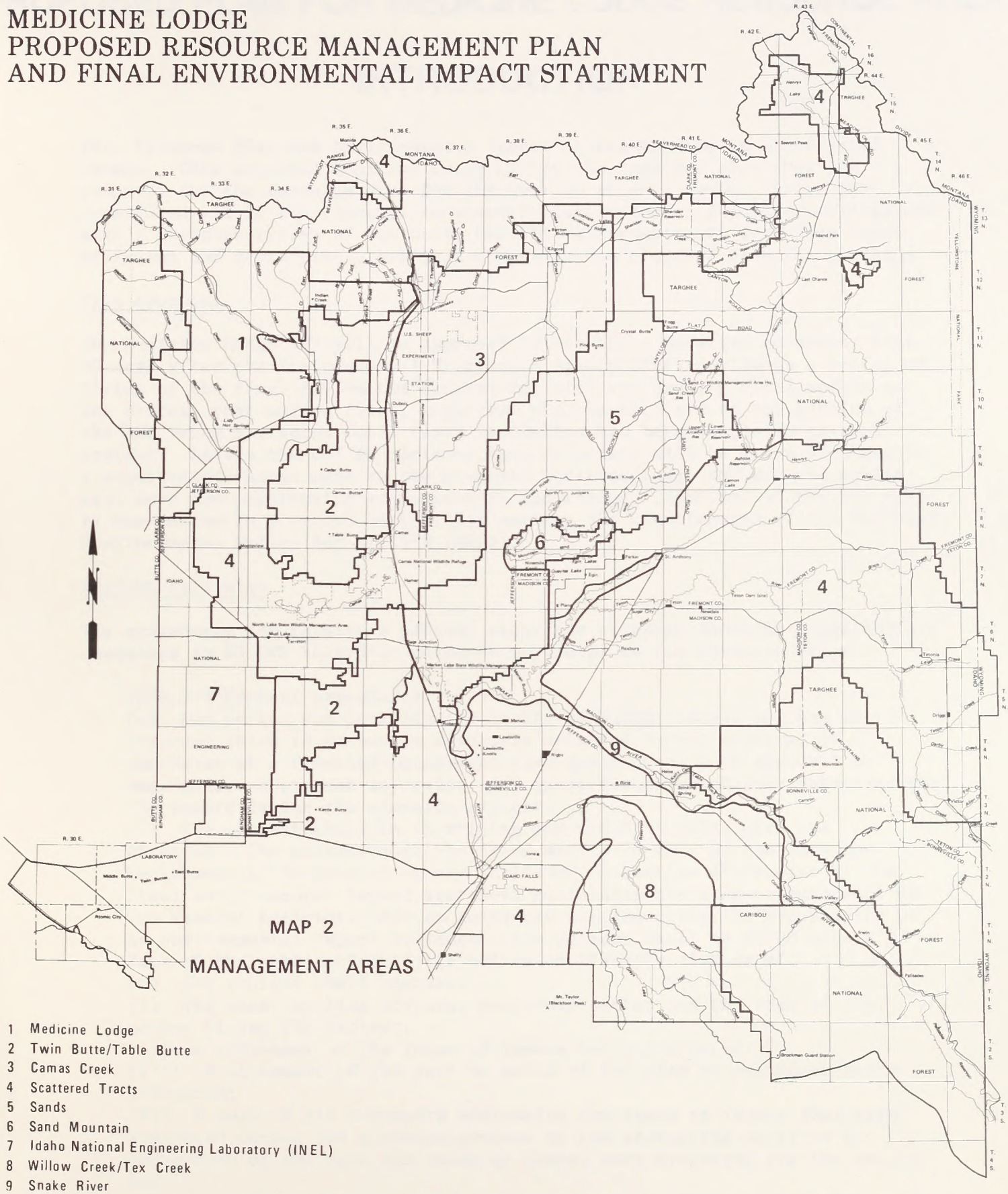
Management Objective/Action	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Wildlife Management					
A. AUMs of Use					
1. Elk	20,553	13,476	25,688	25,688	31,525
2. Deer	7,019	5,043	10,401	10,401	10,401
3. Moose	3,204	1,897	7,153	7,153	7,153
4. Antelope	4,283	3,404	4,898	4,898	4,898
5. Whitetail Deer	799	639	958	958	958
B. Wildlife Habitat Improvements					
1. Brush Control (acres)	7,060	0	21,465	21,465	21,465
2. Seeding (acres)	100	0	1,785	1,785	1,785
3. Springs (each)	3	0	25	25	25
4. Wells (each)	0	0	1	1	1
5. Pipeline (miles)	0	0	7	7	7
6. Reservoirs (each)	0	0	9	9	9
7. Fences (miles)	1	0	5	5	5
8. Wildlife Guzzlers (each)	8	0	33	33	34
9. Goose Nest Platforms (each)	20	0	20	20	20
10. Bitterbrush Plantings (acres)	55	0	245	245	245
11. Curl Leaf Mahogany Treatment (acres)	5	0	50	50	50
12. Shelterbelt Plantings	0	0	3	3	3
13. Aspen Treatment	11	0	65	65	65
C. Management Actions					
1. Designate and manage peregrine prey base (acres).	0	0	40	40	40
Riparian and Fisheries Management					
A. Miles of stream managed primarily for riparian habitat improvement or water quality protection (portion to be managed by exclosure/miles of fencing required)	1.2 (0/0)	19.2 (1.5/3)	19.2 (1.5/3)	19.2 (1.5/3)	19.9 (2.2/5)
B. Miles of stream to be managed for fishery habitat and riparian habitat improvement. (Portion to be managed by exclosure/miles of fencing required).	0 (0/0)	4.7 (.5/1.0)	11.3 (5.3/10.6)	11.3 (5.3/10.6)	12.3 (11.3/23.3)
C. Miles of stream managed to maintain existing fisheries water quality and riparian habitat in current satisfactory condition.	52.9	52.9	52.9	52.9	52.9
Recreation Management					
A. ORV Designations					
1. Open	647,599	647,599	601,923	590,244	593,233
2. Limited					
a. Seasonal	21,580	21,580	69,400	64,600	53,600
b. Designated Routes	0	0	27,889	27,889	12,479
3. Closed	1,120	1,120	18,907	30,586	43,007
B. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Classes					
1. Primitive	0	0	0	6,560	21,100
2. Semi-primitive, non-motorized	0	0	12,030	15,030	15,030
3. Semi-primitive, motorized	52,280	52,280	40,510	29,900	29,900
4. Roaded natural	450,039	450,039	449,779	450,829	436,289
5. Rural	146,400	146,400	146,400	146,400	146,400
C. Recreation Sites or Developments	0	17	9	8	7
Special Designations					
1. National Natural Landmark	28,470	28,470	28,470	28,470	28,470
2. North Menan Butte ACEC	0	0	1,120	1,120	1,120
3. Snake River ACEC	0	0	11,120	11,120	11,120
4. Nine Mile Knoll ACEC	0	0	31,060	31,060	31,060
5. Special Recreation Management Areas	0	51,659	51,659	51,659	51,659
6. Research Natural Areas	0	0	2,567	2,977	3,117
7. National Recreation Trail	0	1 mi.	1 mi.	1 mi.	1 mi.
Wilderness					
A. WSA Recommendations					
1. Suitable	0	0	0	6,715	21,870
2. Nonsuitable	21,870	21,870	21,870	15,155	0
Fire Management					
A. Prescribed Fire Areas	7,010	164,378	51,505	51,505	25,720
B. Full Suppression	648,719	648,719	431,523	431,523	648,719
C. Limited Suppression	0	0	217,196	217,196	0

MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE AREA
GENERAL LOCATION MAP

MAP 1



MEDICINE LODGE
PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



PROPOSED PLAN FOR MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE AREA

INTRODUCTION

This Proposed Plan and Environmental Impact Statement uses an abbreviated format. This proposed Medicine Lodge RMP is the land use plan that BLM proposes for the resource area for the next 10 or more years. After BLM considered all of the comments received by letter and at 2 public hearings and made a thorough review of the Draft RMP/EIS, Alternative C, with some minor additions and corrections, has been chosen as the proposed plan for the area.

Plan Approval

The Medicine Lodge RMP will be approved by the State Director no sooner than 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes a notice of filing of the final EIS in the Federal Register and pending final action on any protest that may be filed. Approval will be withheld on any portion of the RMP being protested until final resolution has been completed on such protest. Before the RMP is approved, public notice will be given if there is a significant change made to the proposed Medicine Lodge RMP and the public will have the opportunity to comment on the change. Approval of the RMP will be documented in a record of decision meeting the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

Protest Provision

The procedures for raising a protest about the proposed Medicine Lodge RMP are contained in 43 CFR 1610.5-2, which is reprinted in its entirety below.

> 1610.5-2 Protest procedures.
> (a) Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan may protest such approval or amendment. A protest may raise only those issues which were submitted for the record during the planning process.
> (1) The protest shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Director. The protest shall be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency published the notice of receipt of the final environmental impact statement containing the plan or amendment in the Federal Register. For an amendment not requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the protest shall be filed within 30 days of the publication of the notice of its effective date.
> (2) The protest shall contain:
> (i) The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest;
> (ii) A statement of the issue or issues being protested;
> (iii) A statement of the part or parts of the plan or amendment being protested;
> (iv) A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and
> (v) A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.

(3) The Director shall promptly render a decision on the protest. The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons for the decision. The decision shall be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested.
(b) The decision of the Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

Protests should be filed with the Director (202), Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Governor's Review

The Governor of the State of Idaho has an opportunity to review this Medicine Lodge RMP for consistency with State and local plans, policies, and programs. The Governor has 60 days from the date this document is filed with EPA to identify any inconsistencies and provide written recommendations to the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, 3380 Americana Terrace, Boise, Idaho 83706.

Note that recommendations on wilderness study areas (WSAs) may not be protested since BLM and the Secretary of the Interior are merely making recommendations to the President. Protests on these recommendations will be returned to the protesting party.

Final Wilderness EIS

Only Congress can add an area to the National Wilderness Preservation System. BLM and the Secretary of the Interior make suitability recommendations to the President, who in turn makes recommendations to Congress.

A separate final wilderness EIS and a wilderness study report for each WSA will be prepared for the suitability recommendations made in the Medicine Lodge RMP. It will contain a detailed analysis and rationale for the suitability recommendations. All individuals and organizations on the Medicine Lodge RMP mail list will receive a copy of the final wilderness EIS.

Changes in the Proposed Plan

The following changes were made between Alternative C published September 1984 in the Draft RMP and the proposed plan.

- Four small Research Natural Areas (RNA) were added to the proposed plan. One RNA is located in the Game Creek area east of Driggs and encompasses 375 acres. Three islands in the South Fork of the Snake River representing relatively undisturbed areas of Cottonwood and riparian vegetation are being proposed as RNAs. One island is located in the upper portion of the river below Palisades Dam, one in the middle portion referred to as the "scenic portion" below Conant Landing, and one island below the Heise area. The three islands total 72 acres. As in the Draft RMP, North Menan Butte and the North Junipers continue to be identified as RNAs.

- o Nine Mile Knoll Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) was reduced in size from about 35,000 acres in the Draft RMP to 31,060 acres in this proposed plan. The ACEC includes the critical winter range of the Sand Creek elk herd and moose and deer that also winter in the area. See management areas 5 and 6.

- o One additional tract of 80 acres was added as potentially suitable for agricultural production and transfer from public ownership. The tract is located east of Sage Junction on I-15 and is shown on Map 3b at the end of this document.

- o Activities within special management areas which are prohibited or restricted have been clarified in this proposed plan. Special management areas include the Snake River ACEC and Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), North Menan Butte ACEC, Nine Mile Knoll ACEC, St. Anthony Sand Dunes SRMA, and the six research natural areas.

- o In the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS, page 4-23, the environmental consequences of Alternative C (Preferred Alternative) for Recreation and ORV Management was incorrect. Those consequences for Alternative E were duplicated on page 4-23. The following is the correct assessment of environmental consequences for Alternative C. This should replace page 4-23 of the Draft RMP/EIS.

Recreation and ORV Management

Opportunities would not be provided in the primitive ROS class. Nonmotorized classes would make up about 2 percent of the resource area, while motorized setting would remain on 98 percent. Overall, this is a minor change from the existing situation.

The 14,759 acre Snake River System and the 36,900 acre St. Anthony Sand Dunes complex would be designated special recreation management areas. The remaining lands in the resource area would be identified as an extensive recreation management area. Management plans would be prepared that focus on maintaining the ROS classes and developing recreation sites where the heaviest use occurs. Special attention will be necessary in preparing a plan for the Snake River System to insure that all land and resource managing agencies are fully involved throughout the process.

Nine of the existing undeveloped and unmaintained recreation sites would be developed, maintained and managed to accomodate day and overnight use. Impacts from litter, inadequate sanitation and uncontrolled motorized use would be minimized. One mile of trail would be constructed on North Menan Butte to provide additional opportunities for nature study. These developments would help to some degree meet the current needs and projections (both short and long-term) for recreation facilities shown in the 1983 Idaho Outdoor Recreation Plan. Developed recreation use and quality would increase on sites that are developed.

Dispersed ORV recreation would be eliminated on 18,907 acres. The most severe impacts would occur in the Stinking Springs area (4,900 acres). It is estimated that about 20 percent of all ORV recreation in the resource area occurs in this area.

Under this alternative, highly valued recreation lands along the South Fork of the Snake River would be zoned for restrictive minerals management. This will give surface protection and help preserve the natural appearance of the landscape, which is generally important to all recreationists.

The impacts on recreation from forest management would be similar to those in Alternative A. However, added restrictions on timber harvesting would benefit nonmotorized forms of recreation.

Wildlife and fisheries management, under this alternative, would increase populations of big game and fish, which could improve the success ratio for sportsmen. However, the effect cannot be accurately quantified since success is only one of several factors that affect the hunting experience.

Format

Management objectives and proposed management decisions are described for each of the 9 management areas in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. Additional materials are provided in this document to clarify the proposed decisions for the reader. A land status map is located in a pocket on the back cover (Map 3a) and the reverse side (Map 3b) shows special management areas. Map 4 at the end of the document shows proposed improvements and Map 5 shows areas with seasonal restrictions to protect and maintain wildlife habitat. More specific wildlife data and range management data for each grazing allotment is provided in the Appendix.

THE MANAGEMENT AREAS

The Medicine Lodge Resource Area has been divided into 9 management areas for purposes of organizing and presenting decisions. A management area generally contains lands having similar resource features and characteristics. It can effectively be managed as a unit. Objectives for the area and decisions differ from other management areas.

Each management area is defined in terms of its description, resource management objectives and required actions. The description identifies the major natural, physical and cultural resources of the management area. The resource management objectives set priorities for managing the various resources in the area. Required actions identify the management actions, limitations and other provisions which are needed to accomplish the objectives.

The management areas are delineated on Map 2 and are described in more detail in the Proposed Management Area Decisions in this document.

In addition to the 9 management areas defined in the plan one additional area contains public lands which need to be recognized. This area is within the Teton Dam project and is currently under the management of the Bureau of Reclamation. The area has approximately 3,470 acres of public land. Major resource values included in the area are wildlife, fisheries and recreation.

If the Teton Dam project were ever to be deauthorized the management of the public lands would return to the Bureau of Land Management. Management emphasis for the area would be placed on wildlife, fisheries and recreation.

This resource management plan includes the administration of about 930,000 acres of federal mineral estate by the Bureau of Land Management, regardless of surface ownership. This acreage includes about 774,000 acres of open and withdrawn public lands and excludes mineral estate within the National Forest.

MULTIPLE USE AND TRANSFER CLASSES

Each management area in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area is assigned to one or more multiple use or transfer classes: moderate use class, limited use class or transfer class. Multiple use and transfer classes are general planning categories included in Idaho RMPs to provide statewide consistency and uniformity.

Multiple use and transfer classes serve two purposes in this plan. The first is to describe overall resource opportunities and constraints by indicating what level of resource production and use is appropriate, what intensity of management is needed, whether there are sensitive and significant resources which must be protected, and whether BLM would consider transfer of public lands from its jurisdiction. The second is to provide a basis for considering unexpected proposals by supplementing the detailed resource management objectives and required actions established for the management area with general purpose and policy statements. This feature is intended to help keep the plan responsive to demands and to reduce the number of future plan amendments that otherwise might be needed.

Before undertaking or approving any resource management action on public lands in the resource area, BLM will ensure that the action is consistent with the purposes and policies of the multiple use or transfer class or classes involved.

The multiple use or transfer class or classes assigned to each management area are shown on Maps, and identified in the management area descriptions beginning on page 6. Public lands are placed in the multiple use or transfer class that best reflects the specific resources and management priorities for the area. The multiple use and transfer classes described for each management area pertains to only the surface acres managed by the BLM.
A description of these classes and their purposes and policies is as follows:

MODERATE USE CLASS

Purpose

The purpose of a moderate use class is to delineate public lands which are suitable for a wide variety of existing and potential uses. The majority of public lands in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area falls in this class.

Policy

The moderate use class provides for the production or use of forage, timber, minerals and energy, recreation, or other consumptive resources while maintaining or enhancing natural systems. These areas will be managed for a moderate intensity of use. These areas will generally be available for production and use of consumptive resources, subject to BLM standard operating procedures and other controls as needed. Sensitive and significant resource values, however, will be protected consistent with federal and state law. Public lands in a moderate use class will generally be retained in federal ownership for long term multiple use management. However, land exchange proposals clearly in the public interest and recreation and public purpose applications will be considered.

LIMITED USE CLASS

Purpose

The purpose of a limited use class is to delineate public lands where strict environmental controls are required to protect sensitive and significant resources. The South Fork of the Snake River, Nine Mile Knoll, and Game Creek are examples of limited use classes in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area.

Policy

The limited use class protects key wildlife habitat, scenic values, wilderness, cultural resources, watershed, and other sensitive and significant resources while providing for other compatible uses. These areas will be managed for relatively low intensities of use and with strict environmental controls to protect sensitive and significant values. A limited use class may be closed to or contain restrictions on ORV use, mineral and energy

exploration and development, forest management practices, location of utility corridors and installations, and livestock grazing. Because of the relatively significant environmental considerations in these areas, some uses may not be permitted. Special attention will be given to finding appropriate locations for compatible uses. Public lands in a limited use class will generally be retained in federal ownership for long term multiple use management. However, land exchange proposals clearly in the public interest and recreation and public purpose applications will be considered.

TRANSFER CLASS

Purpose

The purpose of a transfer class is to delineate these public lands which are considered for transfer out of federal ownership.

Policy

A transfer class is the only class in which public lands may be transferred out of federal ownership under this plan. Public lands declared eligible for transfer by their inclusion in this category meets the criteria of Section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. These lands in this category are subject to detailed consideration prior to the final decision regarding transfer. Transfer classes are delineated in response to specific demands and needs identified during the planning process, such as agricultural development, community expansion, and other transfers, including transfers to the State of Idaho. Transfer classes will be managed on a custodial basis until transferred from BLM jurisdiction. Public investments in these lands will generally not be made except to prevent damage to important public resource values.

PROPOSED MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

MANAGEMENT AREA 1 MEDICINE LODGE

The Medicine Lodge Management Area contains 168,678 acres of public land, of which the majority is well blocked. The area rises to the north and west and peaks at the Continental Divide on the Montana/Idaho state line. The highest elevation in the resource area occurs on Red Conglomerate Peak at 10,106 feet. There is considerable perennial water in the area and the major resource uses are livestock forage and wildlife habitat. The area has higher precipitation and more production potential than public lands that lie to the south and southeast at lower elevations.

The area contains industrial grade limestone, travertine building stone and bentonite clays.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes

   a. Classified as Moderate Use: 162,289 acres.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: 5,920 acres in the northwest corner of the area classed as a Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized. About 187 acres are withdrawn from the timber base because of site capability.
   c. Classified for Transfer: 280 acres of isolated tracts.

2. Retain a public land base of 168,398 acres for long term management in federal ownership.

3. Manage 176,900 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development with consideration being given for wildlife, water and water quality and riparian use.

4. Manage 1,184 acres of commercial forest land for timber production according to current silvicultural practices. Manage 1,347 acres of woodland while maintaining or improving wildlife habitat.

5. Manage 162,939 acres for grazing. Improve 26,225 acres of fair condition range to good. Increase stocking levels in the long term by 5,318 AUMs over existing use levels through range improvement and better distribution.

6. Provide forage and cover for existing and projected wildlife numbers. maintain or improve at least 75% of all terrestrial wildlife habitat in satisfactory condition.

7. Improve water quality from poor to fair on approximately 11 miles of stream in the area.

8. Continue to manage for dispersed recreation opportunities in the area.

9. Manage 22,700 acres as limited fire suppression and the remaining 145,978 acres as full suppression.

10. Manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and potential scientific uses.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. Examine 280 acres of public land, applying the standard operating procedures, for sale, state or private exchange (Map 3b). Utilities would be limited to existing corridors where possible.

2. None of the lands would be closed to mineral leasing and only 160 acres closed to mining claim location. A total of 31,900 acres would be open to leasing under seasonal occupancy restrictions and 12,500 acres under no surface occupancy. The majority of the area, 132,500 acres, would be open to mineral leasing and exploration with standard stipulations. The majority would be available for sale of mineral materials with only 14,900 acres closed to protect other values.

3. Timber sales could be held on 1,184 acres with 189 acres withdrawn from sales to protect elk winter range and calving areas, predominately in the West Fork of Irving Creek and Patelick Creek areas. An additional 1,347 acres of woodland would be managed for production of forest products with measures to maintain or improve mountain mahogany for wildlife uses.

4. Of the 25 grazing allotments, reductions would be made in four of the allotments and an increase on one allotment. For the management area as a whole, the initial stocking rate of 28,763 is above the 5 year average, but less than active preference. Long term stocking would be essentially the same as active grazing preference.

   Proposed improvements include 18,200 acres brush control, 1,500 acres seeding, 12 springs, 2 wells, 14.5 miles of pipeline, 18 reservoirs, and 51.5 miles of fence.

5. An HMP would be developed for the Edie Creek Bench for about 168,700 acres. Objectives of the HMP would be to improve deer, antelope, sage grouse, and moose habitat. Vegetation manipulation would be accomplished through controlled burning and as a result of livestock grazing adjustments.

6. A Water Quality Management Plan would be developed for Indian Creek and one for Edie and Irving Creeks. Actions would likely include fencing of some riparian areas, drift or trail fencing and some improved livestock distribution measures.

7. There would be 5,920 acres closed to ORV use and an additional 6,720 acres with a seasonal restriction on ORV use. Two campgrounds would be developed.

8. A fire management plan for about 22,700 acres would be developed for limited fire suppression.

MANAGEMENT AREA 2

TABLE BUTTE/TWIN BUTTES

This management area is composed of two well-blocked areas of public land totaling 156,561 acres west of Interstate 15. One block is north of Mud Lake and the other is south. The areas are both important for livestock grazing and wildlife habitat. Farming in the area has increased the demand for lands with agricultural potential and several Desert Land Applications have been filed in the District Office.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: 153,366 acres.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: No acres were placed in this class.
   c. Classified as Transfer: 680 acres classed as transfer by sale or exchange, 1,395 acres having DLE applications and 1,120 acres having soils potential for agricultural development. A total of 3,195 acres would be considered for transfer out of federal ownership.

2. Retain 153,366 acres of land in public ownership for long term multiple use management.

3. Manage 161,100 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development.

4. Manage 154,664 acres of public land for grazing purposes. Manage 27,436 acres which lie within the Big Butte Resource Area for grazing purposes. Improve 15,880 acres of range land from poor or fair range condition to good range condition. Increase stocking levels in the long term by 3,167 AUMs over existing use levels.

5. Provide forage and cover for existing and projected wildlife numbers. Improve 10 percent or 4,000 acres of unsatisfactory antelope and sage grouse habitat. Maintain a suitable prey base for 35 bald eagles and 75 golden eagles. Provide foraging habitat adjoining a peregrine falcon reintroduction site in the Buck Springs area.

6. Manage fire on a limited suppression basis on 101,076 acres and full suppression on 55,489 acres.

7. Reduce archaeological site vandalism and manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and scientific uses.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. Examine 680 acres of public land for sale, private or state exchange, act on 1,395 acres under DLE application, and examine 1,120 acres of public land where soil is suitable for farming. Land disposals would meet the criteria outlined in the standard operating procedures.

2. None of the lands would be closed to mineral leasing. About 400 acres would be open to leasing under no surface occupancy restrictions and 39,100 acres would be open under seasonal restrictions. Only 80 acres would be closed to mining and 1,300 closed to sales of mineral materials.

3. Reductions in grazing use would be made in four allotments, with increases in three allotments. The initial stocking rate of 18,613 is below active preference but more than the 5 year average active use. Long term grazing available would exceed the active preference. About 27,436 acres of the Twin Buttes allotment is located in the Big Butte Resource Area but managed along with this area. Proposed improvements include 12,800 acres of brush control, 2,880 acres seeding, 1 spring, 9 wells, 2.5 miles of pipeline, 1 reservoir, and 4.75 miles of fence.

4. Develop a monitoring plan that would ensure maintenance of a suitable prey base for bald eagles, golden eagles and peregrine falcons. Monitoring would also be needed to ensure maintenance of antelope fawning and winter range and sage grouse habitat.

5. Most of the area would be managed for limited fire suppression and a fire management plan would be completed. About 55,489 acres would be managed under full suppression.

MANAGEMENT AREA 3 CAMAS CREEK

This management area presents a fragmented and scattered pattern of 59,480 acres of public land in the area east of Dubois north to the Targhee Forest boundary. The majority of the area consists of private and state lands with public lands in the minority. There are important range resources and key elk calving, riparian, big game winter range and upland game habitat.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: 58,680 acres.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: No acres were placed in this class.
   c. Classified as Transfer: 800 acres classed as transfer by sale or exchange. Area has potential for state exchange actions.

2. Retain 58,680 acres of land in public ownership for long term multiple use management.

3. Manage 74,700 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development, primarily oil and gas and sand and gravel.

4. Intensively manage 1,788 acres for timber production and 1,242 acres of woodland.

5. Manage 50,017 acres for livestock grazing, improve distribution, improve 2,875 acres from fair to good range condition, and increase livestock forage by 310 AUMs in 20 years.

6. Maintain satisfactory habitat in key elk calving areas (especially in the Antelope Ridge area), antelope fawning areas and big game winter range. Provide suitable habitat for upland game on the scattered tracts.

7. Improve 1.5 miles of riparian vegetation on 3 Mile Creek.

8. Continue to manage for dispersed recreation opportunities and manage 1,540 acres as semi-primitive motorized.

9. Manage 58,680 acres as full fire suppression.

10. Manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and potential scientific uses.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. Examine 800 acres of public land for sale or private or state exchanges. Where possible and feasible, improvement in management will be a key factor in disposal of public lands in this management area.

2. No areas would be closed to mineral leasing or mining claim location and only 1,800 acres would need to be closed to sale of mineral materials. Seasonal restricitons would apply to 8,200 acres in the unit and 800 acres would be restricted to no surface occupancy for mineral leasing and exploration.

3. Timber sales would be held on 1,788 acres of public land near the Targhee National Forest boundary, predominately in the Antleope Valley area and Kilgore area. Most of the sales would use select cut methods with only 124 acres clear cut in small blocks.

4. Reductions in grazing use would be made in 5 allotments and an increase in one allotment. Most of these actions would be in the smaller individual allotments. For the management area as a whole, the initial level of 9,066 AUMs is below the active preference of 9,285 AUMs, but more than the 5 year average of 8,422 AUMs. In the long term, the grazing level for active use would be about the same as total grazing preference. Proposed improvements would include 2,875 acres of brush control, 1 spring, 5 wells, 5.5 miles of pipeline, 5 reservoirs, and 11.5 miles of fence.

5. Develop a monitoring plan to ensure that habitat is satisfactory in key elk calving areas (predominately in Antelope Ridge), antelope fawning areas and big game winter range.

6. The 1.5 miles on 3 Mile Creek would be monitored to ensure improvements in water quality and riparian habitat.

7. The 1,540 acres designated for semi-primitive motorized use would be monitored periodically to ensure maintenance of outdoor recreation values.

8. Develop and implement a cultural resource management plan to protect and manage the areas prehistoric and historic sites.

MANAGEMENT AREA 4 SCATTERED TRACTS

Management Area 4 consists of a variety of isolated tracts totaling 28,627 acres of public land. These tracts of land are scattered throughout the resource area. This management area provides livestock forage, wildlife habitat, timber production, and contains the Victor municipal watershed.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: 23,879 acres.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: 1,380 acres on the Idaho-Wyoming state line, which is the Victor municipal watershed.
   c. Classified as Transfer: 3,328 acres for transfer by sale or exchange.

2. Retain 25,259 acres of public land in public ownership to be managed for long term multiple use.

3. Manage 95,570 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development.

4. Manage 3,623 acres of commercial forest land for timber production according to current silvicultural practices. Manage 3,203 acres of woodland to meet local demand with consideration being given to wildlife and watershed needs where these are important.

5. Manage 18,880 acres for grazing purposes. Continue to keep 1,380 acres on the Victor watershed closed to livestock grazing. Improve 600 acres of fair condition range to good. Increase stocking levels in the long term by 90 AUMs over existing use levels.

6. Provide forage and cover for existing numbers of wildlife and maintain or enhance upland game habitat.

7. Continue to manage the area for dispersed recreation with 945 acres closed to winter and early spring ORV use and 375 acres in the Game Creek area completely closed to ORVs.

8. Improve or maintain water quality, fisheries and riparian habitat on 7.4 miles of stream.

9. Manage 28,627 acres of public lands under full fire suppression.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. Examine 3,288 acres for transfer from BLM jurisdiction through sale, private exchange or state exchange. Examine 200 acres for public purposes or exchange and examine 80 acres for their suitability for agricultural entry. Transfer of public lands would meet the criteria listed in the standard operating procedures.

2. Mining, mineral leasing and mining claim locations would essentially continue as they are being handled at present with no changes.

3. About 466 acres would be withdrawn from the commercial forest land base for T&E species and other multiple uses. About 1,750 acres could be clear cut in small blocks and an additional 1,873 acres select cut. The timber is principally in the "Donut Hole" and areas adjacent to the Targhee National Forest. An additional 3,203 acres of woodland could be made available for sales of forest products to meet local and regional demand.

4. Reductions in the level of grazing use would be made in 6 allotments. All of the reductions are in small allotments of less than 100 AUMs with one exception: the Victor allotment. The initial stocking rate of 405 AUMs is quite similar to the 5 year average use of 425 AUMs, but less than the preference of 816 AUMs. For this management area as a whole, initial levels of grazing use total 3,813 AUMs, which is somewhat more than the 5 year average but less than active preference. Proposed improvements include 1,360 acres of brush control, 25 acres seeding, 2 springs, 2 wells, 3 reservoirs, and 4.75 miles of fence.

5. Manage 1.2 miles of Game Creek to improve riparian habitat and improve water quality. Monitor 6.2 miles of stream to ensure maintenance of existing satisfactory riparian habitat and water quality.

6. About 350 acres would be closed to ORV use near Henry's Lake and seasonal restrictions on ORV use would be enforced in the area near Monida Pass.

7. Designate 375 acres in Game Creek as a Research Natural Area. No changes in vegetation would be allowed in the RNA.

MANAGEMENT AREA 5 SANDS

This management area includes 187,431 acres of the Sands Habitat Management Area. The 21,100 acres in Area 6 is also included in the Sands HMP area which totals 208,531 acres. A primary consideration for the area is maintenance of critical elk winter range with important winter range for deer and moose as well. The Sands HMP includes multiresource planning objectives and these objectives carry over into this RMP. Livestock grazing and recreation are important in the area.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: 176,973 acres.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: 10,500 acres within the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC.
   c. Classified as Transfer: Area has potential for state exchange actions. There are 80 acres with soil potential for agriculture classed as potentially suitable for transfer.

2. Retain 187,431 acres of public land in federal ownership and manage for multiple use values.

3. Manage 215,560 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development.

4. Intensively manage 4,253 acres for timber production.

5. Manage 169,910 acres for grazing and improve livestock distribution. Improve 27,000 acres in poor or fair condition to good condition, and increase available livestock forage by 1,042 AUMs over the next 20 years.

6. Manage wildlife habitat for elk, deer and moose in accordance with the Sands HMP.

7. Reduce archaeological site vandalism and manage cultural resources for management and potential scientific uses.

8. Intensively manage the sand dunes for ORV use as a Special Recreation Management Area in conjunction with Management Area 6.
Manage remainder of area for dispersed recreation opportunities.

9. Improve 2 miles of Sand Creek from very poor to good condition.

10. Manage 90,000 acres as limited fire suppression and 97,000 acres as full suppression.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. Both state and private exchanges would be encouraged in order to improve the pattern of private, state and public land in the management area. Land examinations would be needed for all feasible exchange opportunities and transfers under agricultural entry.

2. Mineral leasing, material sales and locatable minerals actions would be the same as the present situation. For maintenance of important wildlife habitat areas, most of the area would have continued seasonal occupancy restrictions for mineral leasing, 4,340 acres could be leased under no surface occupancy and 2,160 acres would be closed to leasing. About 1,140 acres are closed to mining claim location and 11,000 acres closed to sale of mineral materials.

3. Timber sales would be conducted on 3,623 acres, predominately in areas adjacent to the Yale-Kilgore road and in the Pine Creek-July Creek areas. Only 78 acres are withdrawn from the commercial forest base for bald eagle nesting and other multiple uses. The majority could be clear cut in small blocks with about 1,524 acres by selective cut methods. About 3,203 acres of woodland would be managed for production of forest products on demand with stipulations to maintain wildlife habitat and watershed conditions.

4. For this management area as a whole, the initial stocking level for livestock is slightly more than active preference and also above the 5 year average. However, reductions in livestock grazing would be made in 4 allotments and increases in 7 allotments. Proposed improvements include 24,670 acres of brush control, 80 acres seeding, 2 springs, 15 wells, 5 reservoirs, and 27.25 miles of fence.

5. Continue to manage and monitor wildlife habitat under terms of the Sands Habitat Management Plan. If the Sands HMP is revised, the area would continue to be managed to maintain wildlife habitat as specified in the revised HMP.

6. Improve 1 mile of Sand Creek through fencing and 1 mile through livestock management. Maintain existing satisfactory riparian habitat and water quality on 12.8 miles. Periodic monitoring would be needed to ensure improvement and maintenance.

7. A management plan would be developed for the St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area, a portion of which is in management area 6. The dunes would be managed for ORV use. A total of 2,560 acres would be closed to ORVs and a seasonal closure on ORVs on 15,800 acres would be enforced.

8. This resource management plan designates the Nine Mile Knoll Area of Critical Environmental concern (see Map 3b) which would be managed according to an ACEC management plan. Constraints in use of the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC include no disposal of public land, no new roads or major R/Ws, a winter vehicle closure, and seasonal occupancy for O&G exploration and development. The St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area would also be managed under a specific management plan consistent with the objectives for this management area and the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC management plan. (Refer to Management Area 6). Designate 1,780 acres in the North Junipers as a Research Natural area. No changes in vegetation would be allowed in this RNA.

9. Develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan. The plan would outline management and provide for monitoring of site conditions. The plan would be implemented upon completion.

MANAGEMENT AREA 6 SAND MOUNTAIN

The 21,100 acre area is located in the middle of the Sands Habitat Management Area. This area west of St. Anthony consists of the Sand Mountain Wilderness Study Area. The most important considerations in the area are recreational use, wilderness and wildlife winter range. It is a separate management unit because of its status as a WSA.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: 6,480 acres
   b. Classified as Limited Use: 21,100 acres within the Nine Mile ACEC.
   c. Classified as Transfer: No acres were classified for transfer.

2. Retain 21,100 acres of public land in federal ownership for long term multiple use management.

3. Manage 21,100 acres for mineral and energy exploration and development.

4. Manage 16,366 acres for livestock grazing to improve 1,800 acres from fair to good condition, improve livestock distribution and increase livestock forage by 126 AUMs over existing levels after 20 years. Management will be consistent with the Sands HMP.

5. Manage critical elk winter range consistent with the objectives of the Sands HMP, including deer and moose winter range. Provide winter vehicle closures to protect wintering elk under an ACEC management plan.

6. Manage the Sand Mountain area to promote the most appropriate designation, management and use of the area for recreation consistent with the objectives of the Sands HMP.

7. Recommend the Sand Mountain WSA as nonsuitable for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

8. Manage 21,100 acres as full fire suppression.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. All of this area would be open to sales of mineral materials, mining claim location and also open to mineral leasing with seasonal restrictions provided that Congress and the President accept the recommendation as non-suitable for this WSA. Until Congress acts, the area would be managed under the Bureau's Interim Management Policy, essentially closed to new mineral leases or developments. No new mineral actions should be allowed until Congress acts.

2. Of the three grazing allotments in this management area, a reduction would be made in one allotment. The area will be monitored periodically to ensure proper use of the range resource. Proposed improvements include 1,600 acres of brush control, 200 acres seeding, 2 wells, 1 mile of pipeline, and 3 miles of fence.

3. Since this management area is included in the Sands Habitat Management Plan already completed, wildlife habitat would be managed and monitored under terms of that plan as described for Management Area 5.

4. A management plan would be developed for the St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area, a portion of which is located in Area 5. The dunes would be managed for ORV use, consistent with the Sands HMP. If part of the dunes are designated a National Natural Landmark, this factor would be considered in the management plan. Two campgrounds would be developed to accomodate ORV use. About 21,100 acres would be closed to ORV use during the winter in connection with the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC. There are about 31,600 acres in the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC, of which 21,100 acres are located in Management Area 6.

5. This resource management plan designates the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC which would be managed according to an ACEC management plan (refer to Area 5, Proposed Management Decisions). The St. Anthony Sand Dunes SRMA would be designated and managed consistent with that ACEC management plan.

6. If the Sand Mountain WSA is not designated wilderness, it would be managed as part of an ACEC and SRMA. Detailed management plans would be developed for both areas. Other management prescriptions are listed in items 1-5 above.

If the WSA is designated wilderness, it would be managed under BLM's Wilderness Management Policy. Specific managment provisions would be formulated in a wilderness management plan developed for the Sand Mountain Area.

MANAGEMENT AREA 7

IDAHO NATIONAL ENGINEERING LABORATORY

This management area includes 140,415 acres of the eastern portion of the INEL (125,036 acres are withdrawn public land and 15,379 acres acquired by DOE). Grazing occurs on 135,802 acres in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area and on 44,617 acres of INEL within the Big Butte Resource Area. Dominant resource uses are livestock grazing and wildlife habitat.

Managment Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: No acres were classified as moderate use, because the area is under a withdrawal and BLM has limited management authority.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: 140,415 acres, all within the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL).
   c. Classified for Transfer: No acres were classified for transfer.

2. Manage 125,040 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development in coordination with DOE.

3. Manage 180,419 acres of the INEL in Medicine Lodge and Big Butte Resource Areas for livestock grazing. Improve livestock distribution and improve range condition from poor and fair to good on 13,000 acres. Increase livestock forage by 4,177 AUMs over existing levels after 20 years.

4. Maintain satisfactory habitat for antelope and sage grouse, including strutting and nesting areas and winter range.

5. Manage cultural resources for potential scientific uses.

Required Management Actions

1. At the present time, about 125,040 acres in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area portion of the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL) are closed to mineral leasing and mining claim location, and 56,520 acres are closed to sale of mineral materials. Following the review of the INEL withdrawal and completion of this plan, 106,840 acres would be opened for mineral leasing and the 125,040 acres opened for sales of mineral materials.

2. No reductions are needed in the Twin Buttes allotment, which includes part of the INEL in the Big Butte Resource Area. Proposed improvements include 8,000 acres of brush control, 5,000 acres seeding, 2 wells, and 2 reservoirs.

MANAGEMENT AREA 8

WILLOW CREEK/TEX CREEK

The Tex Creek/Willow Creek area contains 11,490 acres of public land. This management area follows the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Willow Creek 208 Project boundary and includes the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area. Public lands consist of relatively small blocks and parcels with most of the land in private ownership and being farmed. Much of the Willow Creek Canyon is public land. The soil erosion taking place is a result of farming practices and the area has been rated as one of the top ten areas needing soil and water protection in the United States. BLM is a cooperator in the SCS 208 Project as well as the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: 11,490 acres.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: No acres were classified as limited use.
   c. Classified as Transfer: No acres were classified for transfer.

2. Retain 11,490 acres of public land for long term multiple use management.

3. Manage about 38,120 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development, primarily oil and gas.

4. Manage about 10,676 acres for livestock grazing to maintain present 92% good range condition and to support Tex Creek wildlife program.

5. Maintain or improve high quality big game winter range in support of Tex Creek agreement. Provide rehabilitation on about 700 acres disturbed by farming operations.

6. Maintain good to excellent riparian vegetation on 8 miles and improve 1 mile of Willow Creek. Maintain good to excellent condition on 7 miles Gray's Lake Outlet, 1.6 miles on Tex Creek and 1.8 miles on Hell Creek in support of the 208 project.

7. Manage recreation resources to provide 8,290 acres for ORV use, seasonal ORV closures on 3,355 acres and close 3,200 acres to ORV use. A total of 6,485 acres is designated as semi-primitive non-motorized in this resource management plan.

8. Manage 11,490 acres as full fire suppression.

9. Manage cultural resources for management and potential scientific uses.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. Land examinations would be made on private and state exchange proposals as they arise to support the Willow Creek 208 Project.

2. Management of the mineral estate in this management area would continue as under the present situation. No new management decisions are needed.

3. Timber sales could be conducted on 118 acres, adjacent to the Caribou NF, by the select cut method and 91 acres of woodland are available for timber management. Sales will be scheduled to meet local and regional demand.

4. Reductions in the level of grazing use would be made in 6 of the 13 allotments in this management area. The initial level of grazing would total 1,790 AUMs, which is less than both the preference (1,935) and the 5 year average (1,833 AUMs). There are two miles of fence proposed in the area.

5. Management of the wildlife habitat would be in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding for the Tex Creek wildlife program. About 700 acres of land disturbed by farming operations would be rehabilitated, 20 acres seeded to bitterbrush and 10 acres of aspen treatment.

6. Two miles of fence are needed to improve 1 mile of stream for riparian and water quality values. An additional 15 miles of stream would be managed to improve riparian habitat and water quality while 3.4 miles of stream will be managed to maintain existing riparian, fisheries and water quality in satisfactory condition. Management decisions will be designed to complement the Willow Creek 208 Watershed Project.

7. About 3,200 acres of public land will be closed to ORV use and an additional 3,355 acres closed during winter and spring to protect wildlife and watershed values. About 6,485 acres are designated as semi-primitive non-motorized. One campground can be developed at Kepps Crossing.

MANAGEMENT AREA 9 SNAKE RIVER

This management area contains 15,352 acres of public land along the South Fork, main stem and Henry's Fork of the Snake River. This is a complex area with demands from many resource uses. Recreation, wildlife, fisheries, water, and grazing are some of the important uses which occur in the area.

Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
   a. Classified as Moderate Use: No acres were classified as moderate use.
   b. Classified as Limited Use: 14,866 acres, all public lands within the Snake River corridor.
   c. Classified for Transfer: 486 acres classified for sale or exchange.

2. Maintain a public land base of 14,866 acres for long term management in federal ownership.

3. Manage 20,800 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development in a manner consistent with recreation and wildlife uses.

4. Intensively manage 364 acres for timber production.

5. Manage 10,333 acres for livestock grazing in support of wildlife and recreation, improve livestock distribution along the river and improve range condition in the Kelly Canyon/Stinking Springs area from fair to good on 400 acres.

6. Maintain high quality riparian habitat, provide critical nesting and wintering areas for bald eagles, maintain high quality big game winter range and improve about 70 acres of unsatisfactory big game habitat.

7. Manage the recreation values and uses of the area as a Special Recreation Management Area with a comprehensive management plan that recognizes other resource values and uses.

8. Manage one mile of Kelly Canyon to improve water quality from poor to good. Reduce man-caused erosion to not more than 2 1/2 tons per acre.

9. All of the management area would be handled as restricted fire suppression area. No heavy equipment and no fire retardant would be used. Fire control would be done in a manner to protect natural systems, erodable soils and scenic quality.

10. Manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and potential scientific uses.

Proposed Management Decisions

1. Land examinations would be needed for 486 acres for sale or exchange. Land examinations would be completed for feasible state or private exchanges as these opportunities arise.

2. Mineral management actions would be designed to complement important wildlife and recreation uses in this management area. About a total of 10,400 acres would be closed to mining claim location where 3,000 acres are currently closed. No change in management of salable minerals would be needed. About 13,600 acres would remain available for material sales and 7,200 acres would remain closed to sales.

3. Timber sales could be designed on 364 acres, in the Conant Valley and Kelley Canyon areas, using select cut methods. About 352 acres would be withdrawn from the commercial forest base for bald eagle nesting and wintering and other multiple uses. The 2,925 acres of cottonwood along the river would be withdrawn from timber management because of high values for bald eagle nesting and wintering, wildlife and recreation. Periodic monitoring would be needed to prevent unauthorized cutting of firewood.

4. Of the 48 allotments under Section 15 lease, 4 would require reductions in the level of grazing use. Most of the allotments are small, isolated parcels of less than 50 acres. About 400 acres of seeding are proposed, 2 springs, 1 mile of pipeline, and 10 miles of fence.

5. Wildlife habitat would be managed in accordance with the South Fork of the Snake River Memorandum of Understanding and the Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan. A management plan for the Snake River ACEC (see below) would be in accordance with these and would be implemented on completion. About 20 goose nesting platforms are proposed, 200 acres of bitterbrush seeding and 10 acres of aspen treatment.

6. One mile on the lower end of Kelly Canyon would be managed to improve water quality and 1 mile managed to maintain existing satisfactory riparian habitat and water quality. The improvement would be through grazing management and reseeding of eroded areas. ORV use would be controlled to further improve water quality.

7. Man-caused soil erosion would be reduced to not more than 2 1/2 tons/acre/year through seeding, ORV management and grazing management.

8. About 1,191 acres would be managed for general ORV use while the balance of the area would be either closed to ORVs (6,020 acres) or restricted to existing roads and trails. About 8,320 acres of the area would be managed as semi-primitive non-motorized. A management plan for the Snake River Special Recreation Management Area would be developed to manage the recreation values and uses. If feasible, a management plan including both the Snake River SRMA and Snake River ACEC would be completed rather than separate plans for the same area. This plan would provide for management of all public land resources including cultural and historical values.

9. Public lands along the South Fork of the Snake River from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henry's Fork, will be given special management consideration. Presidential and other directives have given land managing agencies instructions to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on potential additions to the National Rivers System. Management attention along the South Fork will focus on this objective.

10. Special designations for this management area include the following:
    a. North Menan Butte ACEC, 1,120 acres
    b. Snake River ACEC, 11,120 acres
    c. Snake River SRMA, 14,759 acres
    d. North Menan Butte Research Natural Area
    e. Menan Butte National Natural Landmark, 1,120 acres (currently in effect)
    f. Cress Creek National Recreation Trail, 1 mile
    g. South Fork of the Snake River designated for further study as a recreation or scenic river, 61 miles

    Constraints that would apply to the North Menan Butte ACEC include no surface occupancy for oil and gas operations, the area would be closed to grazing, ORV, and mining under the 1872 law. No changes in the vegetation would be allowed in the North Menan Butte RNA, or in the 3 Snake River islands.

Constraints on uses of the Snake River ACEC and Snake River SRMA are itemized in these proposed management decisions for the management area.

11. Cultural and historic resources and values would be managed under the ACEC management plan.

12. Fire suppression activities would be conducted using no fire retardant or heavy equipment unless management decides natural systems and values could be adequately protected.

13. If the Snake River Islands WSA is not designated wilderness, the islands would be managed as part of an ACEC and a SRMA. Detailed management plans will be developed for areas within the Snake River System. Other management prescriptions are listed in items 1-11 above.

    If the islands are designated wilderness they will be managed under BLM's Wilderness Management Policy Specific management provisions will be formulated in a wilderness management plan developed for the islands.

SELECTION OF THE PROPOSED PLAN

Each alternative included in the Medicine Lodge RMP represents a comprehensive plan for managing all of the public land and resources within the Medicine Lodge Planning Area. Each plan emphasizes a different management philosophy from continuing the present management to significant changes for future management. All of the alternatives meet the requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The selection of the Proposed Plan is based on issue resolution, public input, environmental impacts, economic considerations, and resource production.

A description of the rationale for selection of the Proposed Plan (Alternative C) is summarized by issue below.

Lands - Retention and Transfer

A total of 8,289 acres would be evaluated through detailed studies for potential transfer out of public ownership. Of this total, 5,814 acres would be considered for transfer by means of state exchange, private exchange or through sale; 1,474 acres have Desert Land Entry applications filed on them for agricultural development; 1,200 acres have soils with potential for agricultural entry.

Rationale

The Proposed Plan would recognize the expressed need to make land with agricultural potential available for future development. The lands available specifically for agricultural development under the Desert Land Act would be transferred only if determined suitable as a result of the required detailed studies. Otherwise, they would be retained in federal ownership. This would assure continued multiple use management if the lands are unsuitable for agricultural development.

The Preferred Alternative would maintain continuity in grazing allotments and retain tracts that have high wildlife and multiple use public values. Only parcels of relatively low multiple use value that are difficult to manage or present management problems would be available for transfer.

Access would be a key consideration in all land transfers. Parcels essential to assure public access to BLM-administered public lands would be retained.

Minerals

The Preferred Alternative would maintain 97 percent of the area open to solid and fluid mineral leasing, 85 percent open to locatable mineral entry and 94 percent open to salable mineral use. The area is in the vicinity of the Overthrust Belt and nearly all of the lands are considered prospectively valuable for oil and gas. Most of the lands in the INEL would be made available for leasable and salable minerals development but would remain closed to locatable minerals. Lands along the Snake River would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry. Approximately 30,200 acres would be closed or made unavailable for the development of leasable minerals.

Rationale

The majority of public lands would be made available for mineral leasing, location and for mineral materials disposals. Seasonal restrictions would protect other critical resource values and would not significantly impact mineral exploration or development opportunities. The withdrawals from mineral entry along the Snake River were recommended to protect the water, riparian, wildlife, and scenic values. This river system is unique in its resource values and needs to be protected. The closures to salable minerals would have no significant impact on the development of mineral materials.

Forestry

The Proposed Plan would make 77 percent of the commercial forest land available for harvest with standard stipulations and restrictions. Fourteen percent of the commercial forest land would be deferred from harvest because the sites are uneconomical to harvest at this time. Withdrawal of commercial forest land from harvest would be imposed on 6 percent of the acres to protect critical wildlife and threatened and endangered species habitat. These are predominately critical elk calving areas or areas where bald eagle nesting has been verified. The remaining 3 percent would be withdrawn because of site limitations for harvesting and timber reproduction.

Along the South Fork of the Snake River, cottonwood stands were withdrawn from timber harvest to protect valuable threatened and endangered species habitat, wildlife habitat and important riparian zone along the river. The remaining woodlands in the resource area would be available for select harvesting with stipulations and restrictions to protect and enhance other resource values.

Rationale

The commercial forest lands designated as available for harvest would meet the demand for forest products from the public land. The withdrawal from harvest of 1,114 acres would protect those sites which are fragile and need to be protected along with those forested acres which are critical to wildlife and threatened and endangered species.

Livestock Management

The Proposed Plan would retain 620,539 acres of public land and 180,419 acres of land within the INEL in 269 allotments with grazing preference reduced from 103,281 AUMs to 100,449 AUMs. An additional 55,136 acres are closed, restricted or unleased for livestock grazing. The long term stocking level would be 107,249 AUMs. Livestock use adjustments in AUMs or season of use would be based on future monitoring and consistent with regulations and policy.

The Proposed Plan recognizes the need for additional brush control. Seeding would be done in areas where a native perennial seed source is not available. Additional range improvements, wells, pipelines, fences, spring developments, and reservoirs would be provided where needed to improve management.

Rationale

Livestock grazing on public land is an important economic resource for this area. Grazing on public lands represents an important part of most of the current livestock operations. The Proposed Plan would provide several multiple uses, e.g. grazing, soil protection, wildlife habitat and other resource uses. Range improvements would be designed to enhance or minimize adverse impacts on the other resource uses.

Wildlife

The Proposed Plan would provide for existing wildlife populations that occur in the area and for projected expansion in the populations. The Sands Habitat Management Plan, Tex Creek Cooperative Agreement and Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan would continue to be followed. ACECs would be designated along the Snake River and in the Sand Mountain area to protect critical wildlife habitat. A multiple use resource activity plan would be developed for the Snake River system and wildlife habitat protection would be one of the key elements of the plan.

Rationale

The Proposed Plan recognizes the importance of the wildlife habitat on public lands. It would provide for improvement of critical elk winter habitat, deer, antelope and moose winter range, and sage grouse habitat. There would be sufficient forage and habitat available to meet the goals of this alternative. Riparian areas would be considered of prime importance and be managed to maintain or improve them. Sensitive and threatened or endangered species habitat would be protected. Most wildlife numbers would be expected to increase because of management of habitat under this alternative.

Water/Water Quality

The Proposed Plan would improve water quality, fisheries habitat and riparian habitat on 30.5 miles of stream in the area. Some fencing would be required to provide the protection needed. An additional 53 miles of stream would be managed to maintain existing fisheries, water quality and riparian habitat which is currently in satisfactory condition.

Rationale

The Proposed Plan recognizes the water and water related resources in the area are of great importance to both public land and private land.

Steps have been taken in the Proposed Plan to improve these resources through management or fencing. Other resource water needs would be taken into consideration in all management actions considered.

Recreation

Recreation use within the planning area is steadily growing. Principal uses include hunting, fishing, ORV use, river running, and sightseeing. This plan

would designate two Special Recreation Management Areas: The Snake River System and the St. Anthony Sand Dunes. The Menan Butte National Natural Landmark would continue to be protected. Six Research National Areas, totaling 2,567 acres, would be designated. They include North Menan Butte (340 acres), St. Anthony Sand Dunes (1,780 acres), Game Creek (375 acres), Pine Creek Island (25 acres), Squaw Creek Island (25 acres), and the Reid Canal Island (22 acres).

The South Fork of the Snake River would be recommended for further study as a scenic and recreation river. The Cress Creek Trail would be nominated as a National Recreation Trail. Recreation sites would be developed at 8 locations in the planning area and a one mile interpretive trail would be developed on Menan Butte.

Rationale

The development of the recreation sites and trail would help meet the increasing demand for the recreation resource in the area. There has been an increasing demand for recreation opportunities along the Snake River and in the sand dunes complex west of St. Anthony. The Special Recreation Management Area designation would provide for more detailed planning for both areas so that all uses could be accomodated. This could also provide some funding for management. The Research Natural Areas would provide protection for six small sites which are near natural condition, and have had little human influence.

Off-Road Vehicles

The Proposed Plan would leave 90 percent of the area open to off-road vehicle use . There would be 17,790 acres closed to ORV use and 98,089 acres would have limited use.

Rationale

The closure of areas to ORV use would protect areas where there is severe soil erosion and areas where there is a direct conflict with wildlife uses. ORV use in the area is continuing to grow and this would protect these resources and allow ORV use to continue in areas with less potential for resource damage.

Special Designations

The Proposed Plan designates three Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs): The Snake River System, Nine Mile Knoll, and North Menan Butte. The total area involved would be 43,300 acres.

Rationale

The Snake River System contains a unique cottonwood ecosystem which supports and compliments other resource values. This system contains nesting,wintering and general habitat for the endangered bald eagle. In addition, numerous other wildlife use the river. The river provides high scenic qualities and resources that are important to people who use the river for recreation. This alternative would provide the protection the system needs to maintain these unique qualities.

North Menan Butte offers a unique geologic resource which is used for study by local groups, schools and colleges. ACEC designation would protect this resource from degredation and possible destruction.

The Sands area is the key crucial habitat for wintering elk, deer and moose. Approximately 2,000 head of elk migrate through this narrow corridor and winter just south of the sand dunes. The designation would protect this valuable resource and also provide a means of protecting the most significant dunes area of the sand dune complex.

Cultural Resources

The Proposed Plan would protect and preserve documented prehistoric and historic sites. Activity plans would reduce vandalism and nonpermitted artifact removal, and encourage scientific archaeological research and interpretation. Cultural resources would also be protected in the Snake River Multiple Use Resource Activity Plan. The Nez Perce National Historic Trail would be marked and interpreted.

Rationale

Public law requires Federal agencies to determine effects of projects and actions on National Register listed and eligible cultural resources. The Medicine Lodge cultural resources are fragile, nonrenewable resources. They have significant archaeological research potential and high educational and visitor use potential. The Proposed Plan recognizes the nature and significance of these resources, and would provide protective and interpretive measures. Cultural resource protection and use would remain consistent and compatible with other public land resource uses and activities.

Fire Management

Full fire suppression would be provided on 60 percent of the planning area. Limited suppression would be implemented on 40 percent of the area and prescribed fire would be used as a management tool on about one-fourth of the limited suppression area. Fire management plans would be developed which lay out fire prevention and suppression guidelines and fire prescriptions defining under what conditions burning would be allowed.

Rationale

Implementation of limited suppression areas reduce the cost of fire control in the area but would provide protection during the periods when conditions are such that control needs to take place. Prescribed fire provides an economical means of brush control in this area. Previous burns have proven very successful and economical. Because of resource values and high risk factors the remainder of the area would receive full suppression.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

The following management guidance will be used by BLM in implementing the proposed plan. The standard operating procedures will be used in all of the day to day BLM operations as well as in carrying out the management decisions in the resource management plan.

Air Quality

Under the Clean Air Act (as amended, 1977), BLM-administered lands were given Class II air quality classification, which allows moderate deterioration associated with moderate, well-controlled industrial and population growth. BLM will manage all public lands as Class II unless they are reclassified by the state as a result of the procedures prescribed in the Clean Air Act (as amended, 1977). Administrative actions on the public lands will comply with the air quality classification for that specific area.

Allowable Uses

The public lands will be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield as required by FLPMA. Any valid use, occupancy and development of the public lands, including but not limited to those requiring rights-of-way, leases and licenses will be considered, subject to applicable environmental review procedures, unless specifically excluded in the plan. In some areas, however, environmental values, hazards or manageability considerations may require limitations on either the type or intensity of use, or both. Those limitations are identified in the plan's land use allocations and management objectives for specific areas within the public lands. BLM will include stipulations and special conditions as necessary in leases, license and permits to ensure the protection and preservation of resources.

Lands

Land Ownership Adjustments

The following criteria will be applied to site-specific determinations for lands that are within transfer areas. The criteria to be used include:

-public resource values, including but not limited to:
  T&E and sensitive species habitat,
  riparian areas,
  fisheries,
  nesting/breeding habitat for game animals,
  key big game seasonal habitat,
  developed recreation and recreation access sites,

class A scenery,
municipal watersheds,
energy and mineral potential,
sites eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places,
wilderness and areas being studied for wilderness, and
other statutorily authorized designations,

-accessibility of the land for public uses;

-amount of public investments in facilities or improvements and the potential for recovering those investments;

-difficulty or cost of administration (manageability);

-suitability of the land for management by another federal agency;

-significance of the decision in stabilizing business, social and economic conditions, and/or lifestyles;

-encumbrances, including but not limited to:
R&PP and small tract leases,
withdrawals, or
other leases or permits

-consistency of the decision with cooperative agreements and plans or policies of other agencies; and

-suitability and need for change in land ownership or use for purposes including but not limited to: community expansion or economic development such as industrial, residential or agricultural (other than grazing) development.

The land ownership adjustment criteria identified above will be considered in land reports and environmental analyses prepared for specific adjustment proposals.

Public land within retention areas generally will remain in public ownership and be managed by the BLM. Transfers to other public agencies will be considered where improved management efficiency would result. Recreation and Public Purpose Applications will be considered on all public lands except those lands of national significance. Land exchange proposals will be considered on all public lands. However, these proposals must be in the public interest which will be determined by site-specific application of the land ownership adjustment criteria.

Public land within disposal areas generally will be made available for disposal through sales or exchanges or both. Some land may be retained in public ownership based on site-specific application of the land ownership adjustment criteria. Agricultural enteries (DLA and Carey Act) will only be considered on lands available for transfer.

Land to be acquired by the BLM through exchanges generally should be located in the retention areas. In addition, acquisition of such land should:

-facilitate access to public lands and resources,

-maintain or enhance important public values and uses,

-maintain or enhance local social and economic values,

-improve management efficiency through the elimination of isolated tracts and the blocking up of public lands,and

-facilitate implementation of other aspects of the Medicine Lodge RMP.

Public land to be sold must meet the following criteria derived from the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976:

-the land must be difficult and uneconomic to manage as part of the public lands, and must not be suitable for management by another federal department or agency;

-the land must have been acquired for a specific purpose and must no longer be required for that or any other federal purpose; or

-disposal of the land will serve important public objectives that can only be achieved prudently or feasibly if the land is removed from public ownership, and if these objectives outweigh other public objectives and values that would be served by maintaining such land in federal ownership.

Sale will be the preferred method of disposal when:

-required by national policy;

-the level of interest in a specific tract indicates that competitive bidding is desirable for reasons of fairness; or

-disposal through exchange is not feasible.

The preferred method of selling public land will be by competitive bidding at public auction to qualifying purchasers. However, modified competitive bidding procedures may be used when there is not legal public access to a tract, when necessary to avoid jeopardizing an existing use on adjacent land, or to avoid dislocation of existing public land users.

Public land may be sold by direct sale at fair market value when:

-the land is needed by state or local governments;

-direct sale is needed to protect equities arising from authorized use;

-direct sale is needed to protect equities resulting from inadvertent, unauthorized use that was caused by surveying errors or title defects; or

-there is only one adjacent land owner and no legal public access.

Trespass Abatement

Existing unauthorized uses of public land will be resolved either through termination, temporary authorization by short term permit, Sike's Act agreements, sale, or exchange. Decisions will be based on consideration of the following criteria:

-the type and significance of improvements involved;

-conflicts with other resource values and uses, including potential values and uses; and

-whether the unauthorized use is intentional or unintentional.

New cases of unauthorized use generally will be terminated immediately. Temporary permits may be issued to provide short-term authorization, unless the situation warrants immediate cessation of the use and restoration of the land. Highest priority will be given to abatement of the following unauthorized uses:

-new unauthorized activities or uses where prompt action can minimize damage to public resources and associated costs;

-cases where delay may be detrimental to authorized users;

-cases involving special areas, sensitive ecosystems, and resources of national significance; and

-cases involving malicious or criminal activities.

Utility and Transportation Corridors

Utility and transportation corridor development may be permitted based on consideration of the following criteria:

-type of and need for facility proposed;

-conflicts with other resource values and uses, including potential values and uses; and

-availability of alternatives and/or mitigation measures.

Applicants will be encouraged to locate new facilities within existing corridors to the extent possible.

Energy and Minerals Program

Oil and Gas Leasing

As a general rule, public land is available for oil and gas leasing. In most areas, oil and gas leases will be issued with only standard stipulations attached. In other areas, leases will have special stipulations attached to them at the time of issuance to protect seasonal wildlife habitat and/or other sensitive resource values. In highly sensitive areas, where special stipulations are not sufficient to protect important surface resource values, "no surface occupancy" stipulations will be attached to the lease. This analysis assumes that for horizontal deviations of up to 1,500 feet, directional drilling exploration operations are feasible. However, because directional drilling is far more costly than conventional drilling, such operations would not take place unless there is very strong evidence that a discovery would be made. The general areas where standard, special and "no surface occupancy" stipulations will impact minerals are shown on Map 3b.

Geothermal Leasing

Lease applications will continue to be processed as received. Stipulations will be attached based on interdisciplinary review of each proposal. At the present time, the BLM is not processing lease applications for geothermal resources in the Island Park area. An environmental impact statement completed in 1980 by the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM assessess the impacts of geothermal leasing and development in that area. Based on this assessment, the USFS has recommended that leasing not be allowed unless it can be shown that a valuable geothermal resource exists and that its development would not adversely affect the thermal features of Yellowstone National Park. About 95 percent of the federal geothermal estate affected by this action involves national forest lands. Of the affected mineral estate acres administered by the BLM, about 3,000 are under geothermal lease applications. The future of geothermal leasing within the Island Park area will depend on Congressional legislation.

Locatable Minerals

Mineral exploration and development on public land will be regulated under 43 CFR 3800 to prevent unnecessary and undue degredation of the land. Validity examinations may be conducted under the following conditions:

-where a mineral patent application has been filed and a field examination is required to verify the validity of the claim(s);

-where there is a conflict with a disposal application, and it is deemed in the public interest to do so, or where the statute authorizing the disposal requires clearance of any encumbrance;

--where the land is needed for a federal program; or

--where a mining claim is located under the guise of the mining law and flagrant unauthorized use of the land or mineral resource is occuring.

Public land will be opened to mineral entry where mineral withdrawals are revoked through the withdrawal review process.

Common Variety Mineral Materials

Applications for the removal of common variety mineral materials, including sand and gravel, will be processed using the standards developed in this RMP. Standards vary where different levels of restrictions are imposed on mineral materials disposals to protect important surface values.

Forestry

General

Public lands within Intensive Forest Management Areas will be avaliable for a full range of forest management activities. Areas classified as woodland will also be available for limited forest management activities. Forest activity plans generally will be required prior to initiating forest management activities in all areas. Exceptions will be allowed for small sawlog, post and pole and commercial thinning sales. Exceptions will also be made for emergency salvage sales of less than 250 MBF. These sales will be covered by an environmental assessment and a checklist of contract stipulations that conform with the guidelines developed in the Eastern Idaho Sustained Yield Unit (SYU) Environmental Assessment.

Public land within set aside or withdrawn areas will not be available for the harvest of forest products.

Firewood gathering by individuals for home use will be permitted in designated areas and in some cases undesignated areas by special request. Occasional firewood use may be authorized to accomodate government agencies, nonprofit groups and private individuals, but only when such disposal serves a management goal.

Silvicultural Guidelines and Harvesting Techniques

Merchantable timber or tracts identified as intensive management areas are to be systematically harvested using appropriate methods.

Silvicultural prescriptions will be consistent with accepted methods related to site, species, habitat types, and the individual requirements of the forest stand. Tractor logging will be limited to slopes with gradients of less than 40%, and the season of logging will be limited to avoid soil compaction and rutting.

Salvage operations will have priority when trees are destroyed by fire, disease, insects, or other forest pests. Salvage operations as well as other timber harvest activities will be coordinated with wildlife, archaeological and watershed personnel.

Road locations will be determined on the basis of topography, drainage, soils, and other natural features to minimize erosion. All roads and skid trails to be closed will be seeded to grass, legumes and shrubs. Species will be selected for the forest community and elevation to be seeded.

Slash disposal will be done in a manner conducive to revegetation and advantageous to the passage of big game. Slash will be lopped and scattered where possible with some accumulation in or near openings for escape cover. Slash will be burned when necessary. Such burning will be in conformance with state air pollution regulations.

Logging units will be laid out in a manner that will mitigate the risk of windthrow, and the selection of trees in shelterwoods will be made in a manner that will improve the genetic composition of the regenerated stand. Disturbed areas will be artificially revegetated when natural forest regeneration cannot be reasonably expected in five years.

These are general guidelines. More detailed discussions of measures that can be applied are found in the environmental assessments for the Eastern Idaho SYU EA.

Additional guidelines for Management Areas 1, 3, 4, 5, 9 are listed below.

Old Growth - Is defined as 140 years old through to 240 years old mixed conifer stands. Minimum acreage managed for would be 10% (5% existing, 5% replacement) of the management area's timber base with a minimum of 100 acres. Acreage will be met out of CFL and harvest will be allowed after the stand goes past 240 years old. Harvest will include the first entry taking 50% of volume as a seed cut and overstory removal in stages thereafter.

Elk Summer Range - Will provide a 40-60% cover-forage ratio minimum. Cover will not be below the 40%.

Elk Calving/Nursery Range - 40% of the stand will be maintained with 45-60% canopy coverage and clear cuts will not be larger than 25 acres.

Snag Management - Existing and future management will provide for the following snags/acre.

2 15-20" DBH
4 10-15" DBH
8 5-10" DBH

More may be needed along riparian areas.

Thinning projects - will maintain a uniform distribution of 350 stems/acre at least 7' tall.

Raptor nests - Especially accipiters, a 5 acre buffer zone will be left around nesting area.

Clear cuts - Maximum size of 40 acres with a minimum of 600 feet leave strips between cuts.

Roads - Will not be constructed along riparian areas. Roads will be closed and rehabilitated at end of sale.

Range

Allotment Categorization

All grazing allotments in the resource area have been assigned to one of three management categories based on present resource conditions, the potential for improvement and management objectives. The M allotments generally will be managed to maintain current satisfactory resource conditions; I allotments generally will be managed to improve resource conditions; and C allotments will receive custodial management while protecting existing resource values.

Allotment-Specific Objectives for the Improvement Category

Multiple use management objectives have been developed for each allotment in the I category. Future mangement actions, including approval of allotment management plans, will be tailored to meet these objectives.

Implementing Changes in Allotment Management

Activity plans are commonly used to present, in detail, the types of changes required in an allotment, and to establish a schedule for implementation. Actions set forth under the plan that affect the environment will be closely analyzed. During the analysis, the proposal may be altered or completely revamped to mitigate adverse impacts. The following sections contain discussions of the types of change likely to be recommended in an activity plan and the guidance that applies to these administrative actions.

Livestock Use Adjustments

Livestock use adjustments are made by changing one or more of the following: the season of use, the number of head, or the pattern of grazing. Target stocking rates have been set for each allotment. While most livestock use adjustments will occur in the I allotments, use adjustments may be needed for allotments in categories C and M.

In reviewing the target stocking rate figures and other recommended changes, it is emphasized that the target AUM figures are not final stocking rates. Rather, all livestock use adjustments will be implemented through documented mutual agreement or by decision. When adjustments are made through mutual agreement, they may be implemented once the Rangeland Program Summary has been through a public review period. When livestock use adjustments are implemented by decision, the decision will be based on operator consultation, range survey data, and monitoring of resource conditions. Current BLM policy emphasizes the use of a systematic monitoring program to verify the need for livestock adjustments proposed on the basis of one-time inventory data.

Monitoring will also be used to measure the changes brought about by new livestock management practices and to evaluate the effectiveness of management changes in meeting stated objectives. Detailed guidance for rangeland monitoring is available in current BLM policy and guidance.

The federal regulations that govern changes in allocation of livestock forage provide specific direction for livestock use adjustments implemented by decision. The regulations specify that permanent increases in livestock forage or suspensions of preference "shall be implemented over a five year period..." The regulations do provide for adjustments to be implemented in less than five years when: (1) an agreement is reached to implement the adjustment in less than five years; or (2) a shorter implementation period is needed to sustain resource productivity.

Temporary Suspensions and Closures

Temporary suspensions of grazing use or closures of all or portions of allotments may be implemented to protect the public lands because of conditions of drought, fire, flood, or insect infestation. When conditions such as fire, flood or insect infestation create a significant impact on the normal operation of a grazing operator, efforts to mitigate the impact may be taken by the BLM. These mitigating efforts may consist of relocation of grazing use, modification of grazing systems and temporary nonrenewable grazing use in other allotments under permit or lease. No action will be taken by the BLM prior to consultation and coordination with affected permittees or lessees and other affected parties.

Range Improvements and Treatments

Typical range improvements and treatments and the general procedures to be followed in implementing them are described in Table . The extent, location and timing of such actions will be based on the allotment-specific management objectives adopted through the resource management planning process, interdisciplinary development and review of proposed actions, operator contributions, and BLM funding capability. Since some of the soils in the resource area may be unsuitable for range improvement projects, proposed projects will be investigated for soil feasibility prior to approving location and design plans.

All allotments in which range improvement funds are to be spent will be subjected to an economic analysis. The analysis will be used to develop a final priority ranking of allotments for the commitment of the range improvement funds that are needed to implement activity plans. The highest priority for implementation generally will be assigned to those improvements for which the total anticipated benefits exceed costs. Generally, all structural range improvements will be maintained by the benefitting party(s). All nonstructural range improvements will be maintained by the BLM.

Grazing Systems

The type of system to be implemented will be based on consideration of the following factors:

-allotment-specific management objectives;

-resource characteristics, including vegetation potential and water availability;

-operator needs; and

-implementation costs.

Typical grazing systems available for consideration are described in Appendix B, page B-6 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS.

Unleased or Unpermitted Tracts

Unleased or unpermitted tracts generally will remain available for further consideration for authorized grazing, as provided for in the current BLM grazing regulations. However, certain tracts currently closed or restricted to grazing use will remain so.

Wildlife and Fisheries Program

General

Fish and wildlife habitat will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as a part of project level planning. Such evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed project and the sensitivity of fish and wildlife habitat in the affected area. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to assure compatibility of projects with management objectives for fish and wildlife habitat. Habitat improvement projects will be implemented where necessary to stabilize and/or improve unsatisfactory or declining wildlife habitat condition. Such projects will be identified through habitat management plans or multiple resource management activity plans.

Seasonal Restrictions

Seasonal restrictions will continue to be applied where they are needed to mitigate the impacts of human activities on important seasonal wildlife habitat. The major types of seasonal wildlife habitat and the time periods in which restrictions may be needed are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Seasonal Wildlife Restrictions

Habitat	Restricted Period
Big Game Winter Range	12/01 - 04/30
Elk Calving Areas	04/30 - 06/30
Raptor Nest Sites	Dates vary by species
Sage Grouse/Sharp-tailed Grouse Strutting Grounds	03/01 - 04/30
Sage Grouse/Sharp-tailed Grouse Nesting and Broodrearing	04/30 - 06/30
Antelope Fawning Grounds	05/01 - 06/30
Antelope Winter Ranges	12/01 - 04/01
Endangered Species	No surface occupancy, size is site-specific.

Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species Habitat

Whenever possible, management activities in habitat for threatened, endangered or sensitive species will be designed to benefit those species through habitat improvement.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted prior to implementing projects that may affect habitat for threatened and endangered species. If a "may affect" situation is determined through the BLM biological assessment process, consultation with the USFWS will be initiated as per section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

To the extent practicable, management actions within occupied grizzly bear habitat will be consistent with the goals and objectives contained in the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (USDI, FWS 1982) and the guidelines developed through the Interagency Wildlife Monitoring Program for mineral exploration and development.

Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat

Sufficient forage and cover will be provided for wildlife on seasonal habitat. Forage and cover requirements will be incorporated into allotment management plans and will be specific to areas of primary wildlife use.

Range improvements generally will be designed to achieve both wildlife and range objectives. Existing fences may be modified and new fences will be built so as to allow wildlife passage. Water developments generally will not be established for livestock where significant conflicts over vegetation would result.

Vegetative manipulation projects will be designed to minimize impact on wildlife habitat and to improve it whenever possible. These projects will comply with sage grouse, antelope and mule deer management guidelines. The ID F&G will be consulted one year in advance on all vegetative manipulation projects. Animal control programs will be coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Management actions within floodplains and wetlands will include measures to preserve, protect and, if necessary, restore, their natural functions (as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 and BLM Manual 6740). Management techniques will be used to minimize the degredation of stream banks and the loss of riparian vegetation. Bridges and culverts will be designed and installed to maintain adequate fish passage.

Riparian habitat needs will be taken into consideration in developing livestock grazing systems and pasture designs. Some of the techniques that can be used to lessen impacts are:

-changing class of stock from cow/calf pairs to herded sheep or yearlings;

-either eliminating summer grazing or scheduling summer grazing for only one year out of every three;

-locating salt away from riparian zones;

-laying out pasture fences so that each pasture has as much riparian habitat as possible;

-locating fences so that they do not confine or concentrate livestock near the riparian zone;

-developing alternative sources of water to lessen the grazing pressure on the riparian habitat; and

-excluding livestock completely from riparian habitat by protective fencing if other measures do not work.

Where applicable, the elk management guidelines contained in the Elk Habitat Relations for Central Idaho and Eastern Idaho will be followed. These include:

-managing public vehicle access to maintain the habitat effectiveness of security cover and key seasonal habitat (such as winter range and calving/nursery areas) for deer and elk;

-maintaining adequate untreated peripheral zones around important moist sites (i.e. wet sedge meadows, springs, riparian zones);

-maintaining adequate thermal and security cover on deer and elk habitat, particularly within timber stands adjacent to primary winter foraging areas;

-ensuring that slash depth inside clear cuts does not exceed one and one-half feet; and

-generally discouraging thinning immediately adjacent to clear cuts.

Wildlife reintroductions and fish stocking proposals will be evaluated and recommendations will be made to the Department of Fish and Game. BLM policy requires that a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) be prepared prior to any wildlife reintroduction.

Soil, Water and Air

General

Soil, water and air resources will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as a part of project level planning. Such an evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed projects and the sensitivity of soil as defined in the National Cooperative Soil Survey Standards. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to ensure compatibility of projects with soil, water, and air resource management.

Soils

Soils will be managed to maintain productivity and to minimize erosion to not exceed more than 5 tons/acre, except for some areas of local sand dunes.

Water

Water quality will be maintained or improved in accordance with State and Federal standards, including consultation with state agencies on proposed projects that may significantly affect water quality. Management actions on public land within municipal watersheds will be designed to protect water quality and quantity.

Management activities in riparian zones will be designed to maintain, or, where possible, improve riparian habitat conditions.

Roads and utility corridors will avoid riparian zones to the extent practicable.

Recreation

General

A broad range of outdoor recreation opportunities will continue to be provided for all segments of the public, commensurate with demand. Trails and other means of public access will continue to be maintained and developed where necessary to enhance recreation opportunities and allow public use. Developed recreation facilities receiving the heaviest use will receive first priority for operation and maintenance funds. Sites that cannot be maintained to acceptable health and safety standards will be closed until deficiencies are corrected. Investment of public funds for new recreation developments will be permitted only on land identified for retention in public ownership.

Recreation resources will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as a part of project level planning. Such evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed project and the sensitivity of recreation resources in the affected area. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to assure compatibility of projects with recreation management objectives.

Motorized Vehicle Use

Travel planning, including the designation of areas open, restricted and closed to motorized vehicle access, will remain a high priority for public land. Public land within areas identified as open to motorized vehicle use generally will remain available for such use without restrictions. Exceptions to this general rule may be authorized after consideration of the following criteria:

-the need to promote user enjoyment and minimize use conflicts;

-the need to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, or other resource values;

-the need to minimize harrassment of wildlife or significant degredation of wildlife habitats; and

-the need to promote user safety.

Public land within areas identified as restricted to motorized vehicle use generally will receive priority attention during travel planning. Specific roads, trails or portions of such areas may be closed seasonally or yearlong to all or specified types of motorized vehicle use.

Public land within areas identified as closed to motorized vehicle use will be closed yearlong to all forms of motorized vehicle use except emergency or authorized vehicles. Exceptions may be allowed in Wilderness Study Areas based on application of the Interim Management Policy.

Restrictions and closures will be established for specific roads, trails or areas only where problems have been identified. Areas not designated as restricted or closed will remain open for motorized vehicle use.

Visual Resources

Visual Resources will continue to be evaluated as a part of activity and project planning. Such evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed project and the visual sensitivity of the affected area. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to maintain existing visual resource management classes.

Wilderness Resources

Wilderness Study Areas will continue to be managed in compliance with the Interim Management Policy until they are reviewed and acted upon by Congress. Other areas being studied for wilderness will be managed to prevent unnecessary and undue degredation of the land, and when it does not conflict with valid existing rights they will be managed to meet the nonimpairment standard as well.

Public land within areas added by Congress to the National Wilderness Preservation System will be managed in compliance with the Wilderness Management Policy. Site-specific wilderness management plans will be developed for such areas.

Areas reviewed by Congress but not added to the National Wilderness Preservation System will be managed in accordance with other applicable guidance provided by this Resource Management Plan.

Cultural Resources

BLM is required to identify, evaluate and protect cultural resources on public lands, and to ensure that BLM-initiated actions and projects do not inadvertently damage or destroy non-federal cultural resources. The Antiquities Act of 1906, the Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960, as amended by P.L. 933-191, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Executive Order 11593 (1971), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, and Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 mandate BLM's cultural resource protection policy.

This policy requires BLM to conduct or cause to be conducted an intensive (Class III) inventory before any Bureau initiated or authorized surface disturbing activities and land sales or transfers from federal management are allowed. Inventories are conducted according to BLM Manual Section 8111.4 specifications. They supplement other inventories which may have previously located, identified and evaluated an affected area's cultural resources.

When cultural resource values are discovered in a proposed project or authorized action area they will be protected by the following methods:

1. Avoidance. Cultural resources are protected by redesigning or relocating projects, or excluding significant cultural resource areas from authorized use agreements, and land sales or transfers.

2. Salvage. If a project cannot be redesigned or relocated, cultural resource values will be salvaged through controlled, scientific methods (i.e. complete surface collection and/or excavation).

3. Project/Action Abandonment. If a site has significant cultural resource values which cannot adequately be protected by avoidance or salvage, then project or action would be abandoned.

4. Consultation. If properties which may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places are discovered, BLM will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Site documentation will be forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register to obtain an eligibility determination, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 63.

In a stewardship role, BLM manages documented cultural resource sites and values for public benefit.

The Department of the Interior has issued instructions setting forth this management structure through a use evaluation system. The purposes of the system are to analyze the scientific and sociocultural values of cultural resources, to provide a basis for allocation of cultural resources, to make cultural resources an important part of the planning system, and to identify information needed when existing documentation is inadequate to support a reasonable cultural resource-based land use allocation.

The evaluation of cultural resources requires the consideration of actual or potential use of individual sites or properties within the following categories:

1. Sociocultural Use. This category refers to the use of an object (including flora and fauna), structure or place based on a social or cultural group's perception that the item has utility in maintaining the group's heritage or existence.

2. Current Scientific Use. This category refers to a study or project in progress at the time of evaluation for which scientists or historians are using a cultural resource as a source of information that will contribute to the understanding of human behavior.

3. Management Use. This category refers to the use of a cultural resource by the BLM, or other entities interested in the management of cultural resources, to obtain specific information that is needed for the reasonable allocation of cultural resources or for the development of effective preservation measures.

4. Conservation for Future Use. This category refers to the management of cultural resources by segregating them from other forms of appropriation until specific conditions are met in the future. Such conditions may include the development of research techniques that are presently not available or the exhaustion of all other resources similar to those represented in the protected sample. The category is intended to provide long-term, onsite preservation and protection of select cultural resources.

5. Potential Scientific Use. This category refers to the potential use (utilizing research techniques currently available) of a cultural resource as a source of information that will contribute to the understanding of human behavior.

Cadastral Survey

Cadastral Surveys will continue to be conducted in support of resource management programs. Survey requirements and priorities will be determined on a yearly basis as a part of the annual work planning process.

Fire

Until the Normal Year Fire Plan is updated, the primary fire protection objective will continue to be the control, during the first burning period, of all wildfires on or threatening public land.

Limited suppression areas will be established following the selection of the Resource Management Plan.

Prescribed burning will continue to be used in support of resource management objectives.

Road and Trail Construction and Maintenance

Road and trail construction and maintenance will continue to be conducted in support of resource management objectives. Construction and maintenance requirements and priorities will be determined on a yearly basis as a part of the annual work planning process.

Investment of public funds for road and trail construction generally will be permitted only on land identifed for retention in public ownership. Excetions may be allowed where investment costs can be recovered as a part of land disposal actions.

Specific road and trail construction standards will be determined based on consideration of the following criteria:

-resource management needs;

-user safety;

-impacts to environmental values, including but not limited to wildlife and fisheries habitat, soil stability, recreation, and scenery; and

-construction and maintenance costs.

Detailed Management Plans

The RMP provides general guidance for the resource area. More detailed management plans called activity plans will, however, be prepared to deal with areas where a greater level of detail is required. Activity plans will indicate specific management practices, improvements, allocations, and other information for a particular site or area. They will be prepared for most major BLM programs such as range (allotment management plans), recreation (recreation area management plans), wildlife (habitat management plans), and

cultural resources (cultural resources activity plans). Where two or more activities have activity plan needs in the same general area, a single consolidated activity plan may be prepared. Coordination, consultation and public involvement are integral parts in the formulation of activity plans.

Economic and Social Considerations

BLM will ensure that any management action undertaken in connection with this plan is cost-effective and takes into account local social and economic factors. Cost-effectiveness may be determined by any method deemed appropriate by the Bureau for the specific management action involved.

Environmental Review

An environmental analysis will be undertaken prior to approval of any project involving public lands. If no significant impact is identified, the analysis will be documented as an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact. If the analysis suggests a major federal action which would significantly affect the human environment, an Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared upon State Director direction.

PLANNING CRITERIA

Planning criteria were prepared to guide development of the RMP. These are factors and data considered in making decisions. Ten general criteria were considered:

1. Social and Economic Values;

2. Plans, programs and policies of other Federal agencies, state and local government, and Indian tribes;

3. Existing laws, regulations and BLM policy;

4. Future needs and demands for existing or potential resource commodities and values;

5. Public input;

6. Public welfare and safety;

7. Past and present use of public and adjacent lands;

8. Public benefits of providing goods and services in relation to costs;

9. Quantity and quality of noncommodity resource values; and

10. Environmental impacts.

More detailed planning criteria are described in Appendix A of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. The following indicates how the criteria were used in developing this proposed plan.

Social values and economic values and considerations are closely related. Commodity values, contribution to local and regional economies and potential changes in employment and income were estimated in developing alternative plans. The economic impacts of implementing the alternative plans described in Chapter 2 of the DEIS in Part II were estimated to allow decision makers to consider economics in the choice of a draft plan. Social values and those noncommodity values were also considered in developing alternative plans and the choice of a draft plan. Impacts on social values and systems were considered in the development of the Environmental Consequences (Chapter 4 of the DEIS) and used in choosing a proposed plan.

This proposed plan does not appear inconsistent with the officially adopted plans, programs or policies of other federal, state or local governments nor with Indian tribes. The public comments received have shown no inconsistencies. The High Country Resource Conservation and Development Plan, which includes all of the counties in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area, was reviewed by BLM along with comprehensive plans completed by Bonneville, Bingham, Fremont, Jefferson and Butte counties.

Review of these plans showed this proposed plan to be consistent with the completed plans. The Shoshone-Bannock tribe has shown an interest in being consulted before any sales of public lands are made.

Each member of the interdisciplinary team who contributed to the development of this draft plan and the Idaho State Office staff specialist reviewed the plan for conformance with laws, regulations, policy, and agreements. The proposed plan appears consistent with all.

The interdisciplinary team used the most current data available in considering future needs and demand for resource commodities and values. These sources are among those listed in the references near the end of Part II of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS.

Public comments and suggestions were used to identify those issues to be addressed in this draft plan. The alternatives described and analyzed considered public comments. The Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS was distributed in late September and the 90 day comment period closed December 27, 1984. There were 50 comment letters received. Additional public comments were received at two hearings (refer to the Consultation and Coordination section of this document). All of the comments were considered in choosing this proposed plan.

Public welfare, in a general sense, was considered in all the alternatives and was a factor in choosing the proposed plan for the resource area. There did not appear to be any existing safety hazards to the public in the resource area. However, public safety is always considered in all BLM actions, particularly project design and construction.

Past and present uses of the public lands were described in Chapter 3, Part II of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. These uses were important in choosing a proposed plan for the area and were used as a point of comparison for estimating environmental consequences as described in Chapter 4, Part II of the Draft RMP/EIS. The past and present uses will also be important factors in monitoring the final resource management plan.

A cost/benefit type of analysis was not considered appropriate at this point in the planning process. However, all developments that are proposed in this proposed plan are considered well within normal practices and should be cost effective. Before any expenditures of funds are committed for projects or developments, an economic analysis will be made as a matter of standard procedure. These projects or developments must be cost effective.

Noncommodity resource values such as wilderness, wildlife habitat, general outdoor recreation, visual resources, cultural resources, and others were considered in this proposed plan. These noncommodity values were considered in forming alternatives to be analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS. They were also considered in choosing the preferred alternative and this proposed plan for the proposed area.

Environmental impacts were estimated for all the alternatives, including this proposed plan, and are documented in Part II, Chapter 4 of the Draft RMP/EIS. Environmental impacts were one of the factors in choosing the proposed plan.

SELECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Selective management, as applied to the rangeland program, is the categorization of grazing allotments into three management groups based upon similarities of resource characteristics, management needs, and economic and resource-based potential for rangeland improvement. All livestock grazing allotments have been categorized as "I" (Improvement Needed), "M" (Maintain), or "C" (Custodial Management) based upon the following criteria and additional criteria developed from issues specific to the Medicine Lodge Resource Area.

1. "I" Category

   Category "I" allotments presently include allotments with unsatisfactory condition, have the greatest potential for improvement, and/or may present serious resource use conflicts.

2. "M" Category

   Category "M" allotments are in satisfactory range condition, are producing near their identified potential, and have no known present or anticipated serious resource use conflicts.

3. "C" Category

   Category "C" allotments usually include only small acreages of public land or lands classified for transfer from Federal ownership. These allotments do not present management problems, regardless of condition. They present no significant potential for increasing production. Resource conflicts are either nonexistent or are outweighed by other considerations.

The order of these categories as discussed above represents the relative order of priority for the investment in range improvements and conduct of range monitoring studies, subject to user contributions and further consultation. Selective Management within the rangeland program will provide a framework from which prudent expenditure of rangeland investments can be made, consistent with an approved land use plan.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process described in the BLM Planning Regulations 43 CFR 1600 contains 9 steps.

1. Identification of Issues

Each BLM resource area has different problems, needs and resource uses. At the very beginning of the planning process, the BLM listens to citizens' suggestions regarding development and protection of the area's resources. These issues then become important to the planning effort and will be considered in each step of the process. At this step, the BLM needs the public to help determine the issues and their importance. The issues and conflicts are not resolved at this step, but it is important for the BLM to hear specific comments.

2. Development of Planning Criteria

Once the issues have been identified, the District Manager prepares criteria to guide development of the plan. These criteria are used to guide the gathering of information and, later, to evaluate alternatives. The criteria are published for public comment before they are adopted by the District Manager.

3. Inventory and Information Collection

The BLM planning team needs to know the present condition of the resources in the area and their past production levels. The District Manager arranges for the district staff to collect and assemble this information. BLM appreciates public contributions of information.

4. Analysis of the Management Situation

The planning team assesses the capability of the public land resources to respond to the needs, concerns and opportunities previously identified through public participation. The BLM policy and the policies, plans and programs of other federal agencies, state and local governments and Indian tribes also play a role in this analysis. The Analysis of the Mangement Situation for the Medicine Lodge Planning Area is located in the Idaho Falls District Office.

5. Formulation of the Alternatives

Several alternative plans are prepared that will range from emphasizing production of resources to favoring protection of resources, including continuation of present management. Each alternative must be a complete plan for managing the resources in the planning area. The public comments help identify conflicts among the alternatives.

6. Effects of the Alternatives

The BLM interdisciplinary team analyzes the physical, biological, economic, and social effects of implementing each alternative. The environmental effects of the alternatives must be discussed and the relationship between short term uses of the environment and long term productivity analyzed during this step.

7. Selection of a Preferred Alternative

Alternatives and their effects are evaluated according to the planning criteria developed in Step 2. The District Manager then selects a preferred alternative based on information and analysis developed up to this point in the planning process. This alternative is included in the draft plan and draft environmental impact statement which are presented to the public. It is important for the public to participate in the review and comment period at this time. This draft RMP/EIS identifies BLM's preferred alternative.

8. Selection of the Resource Management Plan

After evaluation of comments received on the draft plan and draft environmental impact statement, the District Manager selects a proposed Resource Management Plan. If the proposed plan is not within the range of the alternatives in the draft plan, and the environmental effects are significantly different, a new draft plan must be prepared. After review and concurrence, including a review by the Governor for consistency with State or local plans, policies or programs, the State Director approves the final plan and environmental impact statement.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Once the plan is approved by the State Director it is then time to begin carrying it out. The BLM requests funding to implement the plan and schedules a review of the plan every five years. The review determines whether mitigating measures are effective, whether environmental limits have been exceeded, whether other federal, state or local plans have changed, or whether there is new data of significance to the plan. Monitoring studies begin as soon as possible and are used, along with initial inventory data, to sustain or modify use adjustments. These studies will be conducted on a recurring basis. Monitoring and evaluation reports are available for public review.

10. Maintenance, Amendment and Revision

Resource Management Plans will be maintained to reflect minor changes in data and further refinement or documentation of the approved plan. Maintenance will not result in expansion of the scope of resource use or restrictions, or changes in the terms, conditions or decisions of the approved plan. Maintenance does not require formal public involvement, interagency coordination, or the preparation of NEPA documents.

When changes are required beyond maintenance, the RMP must be amended in accordance with the BLM planning regulations. Amendments will include the NEPA process to determine environmental impacts, public involvement, interagency coordination, and consistency determinations as required by the regulations.

When conditions change that affect the entire plan or major portions of the plan, then the plan will be revised, using the regulations required for the preparation of a new plan.

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER PLANS

This proposed plan does not appear inconsistent with the officially adopted plans, programs or policies of other federal, state or local governments nor with Indian tribes. The public comments received to date have shown no inconsistencies. The High Country Resource Conservation and Development Plan, which includes all of the counties in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area, was reviewed by BLM along with comprehensive plans completed by Bonneville, Bingham, Fremont, Jefferson and Butte counties.

Review of these plans showed this draft plan to be consistent with the completed plans. The Shoshone-Bannock tribe has shown an interest in being consulted before any sales of public land are made.

IMPLEMENTATION

Decisions in the plan will be implemented over a period of years and must be tied to the BLM budgeting process. Priorities will be established for each resource to guide the order of implementation, and will be reviewed annually to help develop annual work plan commitments for the coming year. New policy, departmental guidance or new BLM goals may influence priorities.

Detailed activity plans and environmental assessments may be needed before taking some actions such as timber harvest or range improvement construction. Rangeland improvement projects, for example, will require a site-specific analysis and a review of economic efficiency.

SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

SUPPORT	RESOURCE	REMARKS
Water Rights	Water	All BLM water developments will require application for water rights.
Fire Management	Range Management, Wildlife Habitat Mgmt.	Technical assistance for preparation of prescriptions for prescribed burning, fire management on prescribed burns.
	All	Fire suppression, either full, modified or limited as specified in the RMP.
Engineering	All	Engineering design, review and construction or contract preparation and administration of construction of rangeland management projects & facilities, recreation developments, road building and maintenance.
Appraisal	Lands, Forestry, Range Mgmt., Wildlife, Recreation.	Appraisal of tracts prior to disposal by sale, exchange. Appraisal required for access needs.
Cadastral Survey	Minerals, Wildlife, Range, Lands, Forestry, Wilderness	Mineral disposal actions may require identification of public land boundaries. Cadastral support may be needed for access needs. Cadastral support may be needed to identify timber sale boundaries. Cadastral support would be needed to identify wilderness area boundaries. Occupancy trespass settlement may require cadastral support.

SUPPORT	RESOURCE	REMARKS
Access	All	Legal access may need to be acquired to some public land areas for management and for general public use. Access may also be needed to particular sites for project completion and public use.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The results of implementing the selected RMP will be examined periodically to inform the resource managers and public of the progress of the plan. The results being achieved under the plan will be compared with the plan objectives.

Monitoring and evaluation help the resource managers

- to determine whether an action is accomplishing the intended purpose,
- to determine whether mitigating measures are satisfactory,
- to determine if the decisions in the plan are being implemented,
- to determine if the related plans of other agencies, governments or Indian tribes have changed, resulting in an inconsistency with the RMP,
- to identify any unanticipated or unpredictable effects, and
- to identify new data of significance to the plan.

The proposed monitoring and evaluation plan for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area RMP is shown in Appendix G of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. The plan specifies resource components to be monitored, how they will be monitored, where they will be monitored and when they will be monitored. Monitoring intensity (the number of studies and the frequency of studies) will vary among allotments according to the amount of information that is needed to determine if the plan objectives are being met. If future monitoring shows a variation from RMP objectives warranting management concern, the reasons for the variation will be examined closely. Modification of a RMP decision may be needed, or the variation may be due to factors beyond BLM's control, such as climatic or economic fluctuations.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Medicine Lodge Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement was released to the Environmental Protection Agency and the public in September 1984. During the public comment period, which ended December 27, 1984, testimony was received at two formal hearings and in fifty letters. All letters are reproduced in this final document. Substantive comments are identified and numbered on the appropriate letters, and BLM responses follow the letter section. Substantive comments are those that question the adequacy or correctness of the data or analysis, or provided new information. A verbation record of both hearings is available for public inspection at the Idaho Falls District Office.

All letters received are listed in the following table. Only a portion of the letters contain substantive comments requiring a response. They are noted in the table.

Letter #	From	Substantive Comments Response Prepared
1.	Elliott Bernshaw	X
2.	Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers	
3.	Idaho Department of Water Resources	
4.	Kneeland, Laggis, Korb, Collier, Benjamin and Russell - Law Office for Flying R Ranch.	X
5.	Harry Melts	X
6.	Federation of Fly Fishers	X
7.	Bonneville County Sportsman Assoc.	X
8.	Continental Divide Trail Society	X
9.	Robert Jones	
10.	Trout Unlimited	X
11.	Kathy Schwalm	
12.	Jerald Dick	
13.	Royce Lee	
14.	Joyce Rigby	

15.	Chevron U.S.A., Inc.	X
16.	U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Mines	
17.	Atlantic Richfield Company	X
18.	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	
19.	U.S. Department Agriculture, Forest Service, Intermountain Region	X
20.	Dusty Young	
21.	U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service	X
22.	Fremont-Madison Cattlemen's Assoc.	X
23.	U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey	X
24.	Steven L. Caicco	X
25.	Tenneco Minerals	X
26.	Jeffery Crook	X
27.	Celsius Energy Company	
28.	Brent Knapp	
29.	Idaho Wildlife Federation	X
30.	Susanne Vader	
31.	Hagenbarth Livestock	X
32.	Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee	X
33.	U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service	X
34.	American Wilderness Alliance	X
35.	R. K. (Bill) Siddoway	
36.	Idaho Department of Fish & Game	X
37.	Committee for Idaho's High Desert	X
38.	Randy Brown	

39.	Sullivan Livestock	
40.	U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Pindale Resource Area	
41.	Peter A. Bowler	
42.	Sierra Club, Middle Snake Group	X
43.	The Wilderness Society	X
44.	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region X	
45.	Department of Energy, Bonneville Power Administration	X
46.	State Historic Preservation Officer	
47.	Texaco	X
48.	Exxon Company U.S.A.	X
49.	David J. Thompson	
50.	John R. Swanson	

1

Box 6235
Salt Lake City, Utah
84106

September 28, 1984

RMP/EIS Team Leader
B.L.M.
Idaho Falls District Office
Idaho Falls, Idaho

Dear Sirs:

COMMENTS ON: MEDICINE LODGE Draft RMP/EIS

As a member of the public, I am concerned about your agency's heavy emphasis on consumptive and even destructive "multiple use" management of our public land. I criticize your Preferred Alternative.

OIL & MINERALS
A vast 97% of this resource area is open to leasing, but granted most of this area is in the prospectively valuable Overthrust Belt.

ORV
A vast 90% of this area is fully open to ORV.

GRAZING
To be maintained essentially at existing levels with range "improvements" (brush removal, exotic grass seedings, wells, pipelines and reservoirs, etc.). Allowance for 107,000 AUMs.

WILDLIFE
Only 6,700 AUMs allowed for whatever remains of the originally abundant elk, deer, moose, pronghorn and bighorn. That's about 6% of this area's forage for "big game" wildlife on our public land and about 94% of the forage of this public land for ranchers' private livestock.

WILDERNESS
Of an interesting sand dune area and important Snake River islands-- not a single acre recommended. Some ACEC, however.

I must conclude that industry and destructive recreational interests have little to complain about with your probable plan.

What would be so difficult in recommending some of the Sand Dune and some of the "better" islands for wilderness? Would such management really be difficult?

Maybe we shouldn't be trying to graze cattle on fragile semi-arid land. In fact, maybe public land should be at least 50-50 for wildlife. I would wager that fees from hunting, fishing, etc. approach or already surpass the fees collected from your ridiculously low grazing fees.

- 2 -

I would also wager that the total contribution of sportsmen and recreationalists to the area's economy approaches or even already surpasses the total contribution of cattle grazing on the public land.

And I would certainly also wager that your agency's cost for campgrounds, trail maintenance and wilderness-protection patrols is or would be a lot less than the cost to the tax-payer for the cost-ineffective range "improvement" programs that aid primarily only the ranchers grazing [redacted] private stock on this public land (and all provided at no increase in fees to the ranchers provided these "improvements!").

1-1 Beef cattle from our public lands are a very small portion (4%?) of our nation's total production. It is time that gross and blatent "occupation" of our public lands by private livestock cease. I am not saying remove all of them. But the balance between wildlife and private cows on our public lands must become more "fair." This probably makes sense, evan by simple economics.

So stop most of your range "improvement" programs. Instead, begin phasing cows off much of the public land. Watersheds, streams, soils and wildlife would all then improve miraculously.

Oil & minerals, livestock and even ORV are fine in proper proportion. But I'm arguing that everything else has been given "the shaft" in your recommended alternative.

Yours very most truly,

Elliott Bernshaw

Elliott Bernshaw

P.S.: Copy sent to Idaho State Director.

2

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WALLA WALLA DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
BUILDING 602, CITY-COUNTY AIRPORT
WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON 99362 -9265

REPLY TO ATTENTION OF

October 18, 1984

NPWPL-ER

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

This letter is in response to your September 14, 1984, letter concerning your Draft Environmental Impact Statement concerning the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan that you sent to our North Pacific Division office. The document was forwarded to the Walla Walla District for review.

We have reviewed the DEIS for the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan for Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, Clark, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison, and Teton Counties, Idaho. Our review does not reveal any effects on navigation or hydropower development. Moreover, we have reviewed the project for flood control and hydrologic concerns and found no inadequacies.

In regard to Section 404 permits, the projects which involve the discharge of dredge or fill materials into waters of the United States including adjacent wetlands require a Department of the Army permit and you should contact this District Office ATTN: NPWOP-RF to apply for necessary permits prior to construction.

We look forward to working with you as a cooperating agency. Should you need any additional information, please contact Mr. W. E. McDonald at (509) 522-6627 or FTS 434-6627.

Sincerely,

for L. V. Armacost
Chief, Planning Division

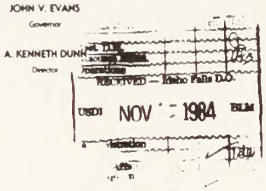
3

State of Idaho
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
STATE OFFICE. 450 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho

JOHN V. EVANS
Governor

A. KENNETH DUNN
Director

Mailing address:
Statehouse
Boise, Idaho 83720
(208) 334-4440



November 8, 1984

Mr. O'Dell Frandsen
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

This is to advise you of the action taken by the Idaho Water Resource Board at its meeting on September 27, 1984 in Idaho Falls, Idaho concerning the Bureau of Land Management's recommendation to not include the Snake River islands above the Lynn Crandall reservoir site in the proposed wilderness areas then under consideration by Congress for federal legislation.

The Board approved a motion at that meeting directing staff to advise you that any inclusion of the Snake River islands would be in conflict with the Idaho State Water Plan.

I was informed today you had not received a letter informing you of the action taken by the Board at the September 27, 1984 meeting. I apologize for the delay and hope this letter will suffice. A copy of the Board motion is attached.

Sincerely,

WAYNE T. HAAS
Administrator
Resources Analysis Division

WTH:alw

cc: Dave Rydalch
Enc.

do a quick review of the inducement resolutions passed today at the next Board meeting and place all proposed bond resolutions on those projects in one motion.

F. Dave Rydalch, Member, mentioned that in reviewing the Environmental Impact Statement on Medicine Lodge District, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recommended that the Snake River islands above the Lynn Crandall site not be included in the proposed wilderness areas under consideration by Congress. One of the proposed plans does include the Snake River islands in the wilderness area. This could impact the feasibility of the Lynn Crandall site and be in conflict with the State Water Plan. Mr. Rydalch suggested the Board support BLM's recommendation to not include the Snake River islands in the wilderness area.

F. Dave Rydalch, Member, moved the Board approve a letter under the Chairman's signature be sent to O'Dell Frandsen, BLM's Idaho Falls District Manager, for BLM's hearing records, in support of BLM's recommendations to not include the Snake River islands above the Lynn Crandall site in the proposed wilderness areas under consideration by Congress for federal legislation; inclusion of the Snake River islands would be in conflict with the State Water Plan. J. D. Williams, Member, seconded the motion.

Motion passed by voice vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent.

J. D. Williams, Member, commented that eastern Idaho is primarily served by Utah Power & Light Company. A recent Public Utilities Commission (PUC) order on ratepaying severely affected Utah Power & Light Company's weatherization program. Because of the public's reaction to the order, PUC is reconsidering it. Since the State Energy Plan emphasizes energy conservation measures and it has been adopted as a policy in the State Water Plan, Mr. Williams suggested department staff meet with the PUC staff to review the State Water Plan's policy on the issue.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Franklin Jones
FRANKLIN JONES
Secretary

BOARD ACTIONS:

1. Adopted Inducement Resolution No. 84-69 to James Burkman for $35,000. (Page 2)
2. Adopted Inducement Resolution No. 84-68 to Matsuura Brothers Co., Inc. for $200,000. (Page 2)

Please accept this letter as the Hittsons' position on this lease. If you have any questions of any nature, please feel free to write to me concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

KNEELAND, LAGGIS, KORB, COLLIER, BENJAMIN & RUSSELL

By Willis B. Benjamin
WILLIS B. BENJAMIN

WBB/k
Enc.

4

LAW OFFICE
KNEELAND, LAGGIS, KORB, COLLIER, BENJAMIN & RUSSELL
KNEELAND PROFESSIONAL BUILDING
SADDLE ROAD
P. O. BOX 249
KETCHUM, IDAHO 83340
208-726-9311

O. R. KNEELAND
STRATTON P. LAGGIS
ROBERT KORB III

BRUCE COLLIER
WILLIS B. BENJAMIN
MARK RUSSELL

ANN LEGG

November 14, 1984

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Att: RMP/EIS Team Leader

Re: Hittson Land Lease

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that our office represents Mary Ellen Hittson, the widow of Ward Hittson. The Hittsons have a grazing lease with the United States Government, and I am writing this letter in reference to your Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan.

The Hittsons' lease is found on Pages B-20 and B-21, Management Area 4, of your manual.

4-1 I have discussed this at length with Mrs. Hittson and also the foreman of the Flying R Ranch, and it is our opinion that the current status of the lease and the AUMS set forth therein should be maintained in all respects. The property is never overgrazed and, in fact, has much remaining standing grass after grazing. If anything, the AUMS should be increased.

For your information I am enclosing a copy of the Grazing Preference Statement relative to the Hittsons' lease.

5

BLM Idaho Falls District Office
Attn. RMP/EIS Team Leader
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

14.11.84.

Comments pertaining to your BLM Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS.

My comments are about Recreation, ORV Management and Wilderness.

Support: Alternative "B"

Oppose: I oppose the ORV closures as outlined in your BLM Preferred Alternative, specially in the Management Areas 5;6 and 9; mainly in the St. Anthony Sand Dunes and Stinking Springs vicinity.

5-1 Comments: ORV Recreation does not recieve the positive planning effort in this RMP/EIS it deserves. The weakness of the RMP, as far as ORV plans go is its, negative only, planning. It is specific as what ORV closures and limitationswill take place under BLM's Preferred Alternative without telling about plans where to this recreational activity will be shifted to for an equally attractive ORV experience. By your own admission (p.4-23) some closures will push out 70% of ORV recreationists from some traditionally used areas. The otdoors recreational planner plans for closures, in effect telling the majority of ORV

5-2 people to "push-off" or get crowded into a small area . Nowhere is a planning effort evident exactly where the displaced ORV enthusiasts are provided with a comparable scenery and challenge. The RMP neglects to plan for substitute areas. To push out 70% of users from a traditional area without defined alternatives will lead to management problems enforcing such closure and it will create a general disrespect towards BLM rulings by such seemingly arbitrarily one-sided bureaucratic rulings in traditional use area.

5-3 In the report a misleading tabulation caption is used for the areas to be closed seasonally. All areas subject to seasonal closure are put under the category "Limited-seasonal" when these shoul be listed as "Closed-seasonal". The BLM term "Limited" refers to an area having corridors left open inside an area described. It is my impression that no such corridors open will remain open year long, hence it becomes a

5-4 "closed-seasonal " area. At times your own text contradicts your tabulation method; example your text Part I p-17 refers a certain area as 3355 acres "Seasonal closure" but as soon you tabulate it becomes Limited-seasonal. p. F-17

In general after reading this Draft makes one wonder how much the "hands on" ORV recreational experience and expertise your outdoors

recreation planners really have in competive and noncompetitive off roading sport? Is it not perhaps a case where personal preferences have influenced planning to an unprofessional degree?

Recreation use/days are referred to, but without evaluating BLM management related ~~influencing~~ factors, influencing the number of use/days.
5-5 The quantity and quality of recreational information available to the public by your District is not evaluated for the different type of activities. What printed material is available to direct and inform the visitor? What is available within the RA? Lack of such information affects the rate of visitation, more so for the non-local visitor of less known localities. It hinders dispersion of activities, specially on week-ends and into the localities further away from your office. Is the lack of planning in this area a planned feature for the future?

Availability of such specific information could be used as a cost effective planning and management tool. Hopefully this will be addressed to in your Final RMP. Plan to establish a Recreational Resource Data Book a copy of which should be readily available to the public at your offices. Current recreational information in your RA is on a primitive pedestrian level.

5-6 In Management Area 3 there are sand dunes, yet no plans are mentioned for these. What are the ORV management plans for sand dunes in MA 5; in R38E T9N?

WILDERNESS: Support non-wilderness status for the WSAs under consideration. Rationale is in agreement with the points raised in your report justifying such non-wilderness classification.

Sincerely,

Harry Melts

Harry Melts
P.O.Box 64
Porthill, ID 83853

4) The emphasis on streams in the plan is on water quality as opposed to fisheries. More emphasis should be placed on fisheries. One can have excellent water quality in a gutter but no fishery can exist.

6-2 5) There is not a very large difference in the Water and Water Quality portion of all the alternatives. This is not acceptable. This apparently means that not a lot of thought has been put into this area. The table in Appendix B lists numerous problem areas with riparian habitat but only a few are addressed in the plan.

6) Where possible land should be acquired along Camas Creek through land transfers. Camas Creek should be a major fishery but it is degrading rapidly. This fishery can be better protected in public hands.

We hope you will seriously consider the above and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan. If we can be of service in supplying details, please contact us.

One idea we would like to see the BLM incorporate is to take the sportsman's groups on field trips within your jurisdiction to help educate and keep us informed as to what is happening on the range. This would allow us a better understanding of environmental changes.

L. D. Goodrich
Rt. 2 Box 360
Shelley, ID 83274

6

Federation of Fly Fishers

The Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and EIS draft is a good effort by the BLM. We appreciate that it is difficult to put together such a plan and satisfy everyone. With this in mind we have reviewed the plan and submit the following for consideration.

Comments:

1) The multiple use philosophy is not successfully attained in the plan. Recreation, as usual, takes a back seat to other uses. We would like to know the budgets that apply to the various uses. Expenditures should be spread with the multiple use concept in mind. Recreation is also big business and should be treated as an equal with other uses.

2) With the increasing recreational use of public lands, all streams should be evaluated for the improvement of or the development of fisheries where none presently exist. This can be done with log plunges, reintroduction of beavers and/or increasing the number of miles of streams fenced. The number of miles of stream fencing, in the plan, is way too small. The Summit Creek fencing project in the Little Lost drainage clearly indicates that trout population can be increased significantly with fencing.

3) There should be general reductions in AUM's. It appears from the table in Appendix B that 1/3 of the grazing range is only in fair condition. Only management area 8 should be considered for increasing AUM's. In the Idaho Department of Fish and Game Fisheries Management Plan 1981 to 1985 it is stated, in part of the area page 213, "Problem-Livestock use has resulted in loss of riparian habitat and fish population in large segments of all drainages on Federal lands:

"Program - Identify areas of overgrazing and riparian habitat damage. Develop programs to halt and reverse trend in habitat losses with appropriate federal land management agencies (i.e. BLM and USFS)." Has the BLM and Idaho
6-1 Department of Fish and Game identified these areas? Also, what corrective programs are underway? This management plan also states in the table on page 215 under "Remainder of Camas Creek tributaries" to "Identify and protect cutthroat spawning and rearing areas." Has this been done?

WRMC WESTERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN COUNCIL

FILE COPY

7

November 7, 1984

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls, District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

ATTENTION: RMP/EIS Team Leader

Dear Sir:

Please include this in your record concerning the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan.

The Bonneville County Sportsman Association was organized in 1911 by concerned local sportsmen.

The purpose of the club is the same now as it was in 1911; the protection and promotion of fish and game in Idaho.

After reading (and analysis) of the BLM-Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan, the Board of Directors of the B.C.S.A. support the following BLM proposals as well as offering some other opinions of the association. We support and concur with:

1. Further study recommendation for the South Fork on the Snake River as a Scenic and Wild River. (61 miles)
2. Riparian Zone improvements, especially fencing-in heavy livestock use areas, with allowances made for livestock watering.
3. Stream improvements; e.g., fish barriers to prevent fish from going into irrigation canals, stabilization of badly eroded stream banks, the installation of fish fences to provide nesting and spawning areas.
4. The planting of duck food plants and grasses, in marsh and stream locations, to promote duck and goose populations.
5. Maintain semi-primitive non-motorized classification for 592D acres in the N.W. corner of Medicine Lodge Resource Area (elk, wolf habitat).
6. Continued cooperation with the Sands Habitat Management Plan, including total rejection of all Egin-Hamer road proposals.
7. Support of the Tex Creek Cooperative Agreement, and the Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan.
8. Proposal for St. Anthony Dunes as national natural landmarks.
9. Addition of wells in the St. Anthony Dunes area to promote wildlife use.

10. Continued protection for Menan Butte National Natural Landmarks and designation of Menan Butte as a research natural area.

The Bonneville County Sportsman Association has the following criticisms of the BLM Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan.

7-1 1. No cost to benefit analysis provided.

7-2 2. The BLM projects twenty-three million in the region from grazing, and twelve million dollars from hunting and fishing contains - no cash - flow analysis is shown.

3. The BLM forcasts in alternative "C" - Livestock Grazing Management - has a 21% increase over 20 years, but your report states in Paragraph 3-11 that use of the range is "trending downward."

7-3 Currently, not all livestock AMU in some areas are being used due to lack of feed. A cost to benefit analysis should be done to see if a dollar spent on the range is equal to a dollar of benefit to the U.S. taxpayer.

4. The report does little to encourage us sportsmen; a great amount of the range has become farm land, much too much grazing has turned a majority of the range into sagebrush with little good grass. "Wildlife" will be lost due to the increase in livestock AMU. No amount of burning or chaining sage brush will allow increasing the AMU for livestock and game in the long run!

7-4 5. Protective fencing of riparian zone is mentioned "as a last resort." Why?

7-5 6. Moose summer and winter range is in poor condition due to overgrazing of riparian bottom. No action-planned? Why?

7-6 7. The cost of BLM AMU's should be at least equal to the AMU fees of U.S. Forest Service. Some of the dollars generated from livestock should be spent on wildlife protection and enhancement. That's the law, isn't it?

8. BLM and Forest Service Land should be traded for private land along Camas Creed, and protective fence installed. No good habitat for upland game birds' brood-rearing areas should be lost through land transfer.

9. The DOE Atomic Energy Site should have no additional AMU, and should be managed as a defactio game refuge. The DOE should chain and burn certain areas to increase edible and beneficial grasses.

The DOE site should be used as a control study range area to compare BLM's Montview and Spencer district to check range condition.

The Bonneville County Sportsman Association has worked hard, and in-hand with farmers and stockmen to promote wildlife in Idaho; yet, also to protect our way of life and our livelihood. But, we feel wildlife values and dollar benefit generated have been left out of the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan.

Sincerely yours,

Pete Huebner

Pete Huebner, Vice President
Bonneville County Sportsman Association

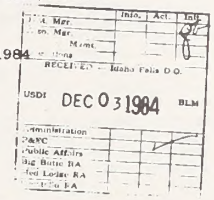
PH/mh

8

Continental Divide Trail Society

P.O. BOX 30002 BETHESDA, MD. 20814

November 23, 1984



Bureau of Land Management
Idsho Falls District Office
ATTN: RMP/EIS Tesm Leader
940 Lincoln Rosd
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Gentlemen:

8-1 Upon reviewing the drsft Resource Management Plsn and Environmental Impsct Ststement for the Medicine Lodge Resourcs Ares, we were disappointed to find thst it appesrs to have entirely ignored the Continental Divide Nstional Scenic Trail.

8-2 The one tract in the RMA which may be affected by the Trsil is in R35E snd R36E, sdjscent to Monids. While there msy be little conflict with other uses, it is important that the Plsn recognize the recreationsl importance of the public lands there that lie on, snd close to, the Continental Divide. Additionslly, it would be desirable to discuss the process that will be used to select s route for the Trsil. We slso recommend that you address the employment of cooperstive sgreements or voluntsry lsnd exchanges with thelandowners concernsd ss mesns to obtain needed permission to travel through the area. A statement thst mansgement will be in accordsnce with the Comprehensivs Plsn being prepsred by the Forest Servics pursusnt to the Nstionsl Trsils System Act would also be in order.

For further information, plesse consult our Guide to the Continsntsl Divide Trail, vol. 2: Southern Montsns and Idaho. (See enclosed brochure.)

Thank you for affording us the opportunity to review and comment.

Sincerely yours,

James R. Wolf
Director

9

Bureau Of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

December 2, 1984

ATTN: RMP/EIS Team Leader

Mr. Frandsen and Team; Please include this letter in the hearing record.

I am writing in regard to the Medicine Lodge RMP and EIS. I urge you to recommend Alternative E to Congress as your preferred alternative. Management plans should be directed to protect wilderness areas, wildlife populations, and self-propelled recreation. Road building and desert land entry activities should cease. There should be a substantial increase in the acreage closed to ORV use. Grazing allotments should be transferred or eliminated to more adequately protect and enhance winter range areas and protect riparian areas.

Prudent stewardship of the public lands cannot be accomplished without further restriction of livestock grazing, and an abandonment of the commodities approach to 'multiple use'. With the low average precipitation and general marginal nature of the agricultural development potential, the management plan should encourage more nonconsumptive uses of the public lands, e.g. wilderness, roadless, winter range, and cultural resource areas.

The following is a brief listing of issues and my recommendations:
1. Public Land Transfer: Retain all Omitted Lands in public ownership. Transfer of public lands should be made to another agency for improved management capability only, and especially if the area adjoins and completes wilderness. No land should be transferred to the INEL. None of the public lands in the Medicine Lodge area have agricultural potential. I am already subsidizing huge tracts of idle (and previously developed) private land. In addition,with the depletion of groundwater, and the over-allocation of surface water, there is no reasonable arguement for development of public land. Isolated tracts of public land should not be sold, but rather transferred to an agency capable of proper stewardship (not development).

2. Mineral and Energy Exploration and Development: All currently roadless areas should be closed to mineral leasing and exploration, or withdrawn from mineral entry if currently under lease. No new roads should be allowed. Total reclamation of disturbed areas should be required (a sufficient bond should be levied to ensure this), and no exploration/entry should be permitted where there is any potential for the disruption of the ground water system.

3. Timber Resource: Currently roadless areas should be closed to timber harvesting. Restrictions on timber harvest should include a requirement that any sale should not be of a deficit nature (no allowance for so-called 'recreational benefit' or credits), reforestation and administrative costs should be included in the cost of the timber, no new roads or extension of existing roads should be allowed and all ways should be permanently closed, and a careful analysis of the soil type and erosion factors made before any bids are let.

(Continued on Page 2)

4. Livestock Use: Critical wildlife winter range and stageing areas should be withdrawn from livestock grazing lease. The value of recreation of all types and the economic value of wildlife should be contrasted with the deficit nature of grazing. Rather than continue to subsidize the destruction of my public land via grazing, a fair market value should be assessed for each AUM, and stockmen should be required to pay for damage to riparian areas and springs. Wildlife use and land integrity take precidence over grazing, so current allocations need to be decreased to ensure this as well as the future demand for grazing. The number of grazing allotments should be decreased to approximately 170.

5. Wildlife Use: Livestock use should be decreased as noted above under #4. All roosting/hunting snags should be preserved for raptors, etc. Migration routes for elk, antelope, and deer should be protected from mineral development, logging, improper fencing, and agricultural development. Private lands should be purchased where necessary for the maintenance of wildlife populations. Allowances should be made for the continuance, at present or increased levels, of Ferrugenous and Swainson's Hawks, eagle and osprey, and sage grouse. Wildlife demands should take priority over grazing, mineral entry, agricultural development, or land transfer or logging. Present AUMs should be cut by approximately 60%. All livestock allocation should be immediately terminated in those areas where the grizzly bear currently, or in the future, visits or resides.

6. Recreation and ORV abuse: All currently roadless and ACEC (areas of critical environmental concern) areas should be permanently closed to ORV use. All vehicular travel should be restricted to developed roads (not 'ways'), i.e. there should be no such thing as ORV travel except in cases of legitimate scientific study (and not to include mineral exploration). Ways and duplicate routes should be closed and allowed/encouraged to revert to a natural state. A two mile square aacrifice area should be designated for ORV use in the sand dunes area (but far away from the WSA). This area, and established roads, should be the only areas designated 'open' to ORV use. The South Fork of the Snake River should receive special designation as a scenic or recreational river.

7. Wilderness Designation: The Sand Mountain, Table Rock Islands, Pine Creek Islands, and Conant Valley Islands (35-3, 34-2, 34-3, and 34-4) should be recommended for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System. In addition, the South Fork of the Snake River should receive special designation as a scenic river (what was this item doing under Issue 6??). All the above areas should be recommended to ensure protection of a diversity of ecosystem types. If not recommended, all WSA should be managed as roadless with ORV, mineral exploration/entry, and logging prohibited.

8. Water and Water Quality: Riparian improvement should be restricted to fencing and other protection-oriented measures. No pipelines, or agricultural development of water should be allowed. The Willow Creek 208 project should concentrate on natural measures; livestock grazing withdrawals should be made where needed.

9. Fire Management: Fire suppression should be contingent upon critical wildlife areas (if a significant portion is threatened by fire). Prescribed burning should not occur unless native grasslands/ wildlife resources will benefit (grazing improvement is an insufficient rationale for prescribed burning).

Thanks for the opportunity to comment of your EIS. Please recommend Alternative E and the above additions.

Robert Jones

Robert Jones
1105 South 3rd
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

11

COMMENT SHEET DRAFT MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name Kathy Schwalm

Address Box 55, Chester, Id. 83421

I found the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan quite well written. (Of course, I do an government document there is much repetition but on the whole pretty good).

I agree with your choice of Alternative in Alternative C. I have not too much objection to the No Action Alternative either.

I was very pleased to see NO WILDERNESS Recommended on the Sand Dunes & the Islands in the South Fork. This will leave the management opportunities much more flexible for you as land managers. I believe that Wilderness Classification would only cause you great ~~many~~ management difficulties.

I agree with Mr Bill Tidwell that to not mention the grey wolf (sightings in the last ten years) at all would be a very good idea. I noticed the grey wolf mentioned on pages 3-14, 9-2, F-36, 7. I do not see ~~much~~ value in the Recovery of the grey wolf therefore to leave out mention would be best.

Please continue on back.

10

November 7, 1984

STATEMENT ON MEDICINE LODGE EIS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Carl Cooper Representing Trout Unlimited Chapter

748 Adell, Idaho Falls, ID 83402

Following review of the proposed management plan we have the following comments:

1. This plan seems to be a step forward from other similar plans in that some meaningful consideration is given to the preservation of resources for wildlife and fisheries rather than enhancement of the grazing and mineral resources.

10-1 2. We found no justification in the document for any increase in AUMS for this area, therefore we feel each alternative should be reconsidered in this regard.

10-2 3. The document indicates (p. 2-2) that the financial loss to ranchers if a "no grazing" rule applied would be ~1.4 million $. The recommended alternative C shows an expected expenditure by BLM for range improvements to cost 1.4 million $ (p 2-23). If these statements are true, then it is possible to avoid any impact due to grazing by using the range improvement $ to offset the financial loss to the ranchers. The argument that a "no grazing" rule would be hard to enforce does not have merit. Obviously it would be easier than what is required now to enforce the allowed AUMS in each area. It has to be easier to look for any cows or sheep on BLM land than to count them in each area.

4. Fencing should be considered on Divide Creek. The ID Fish & Game Department has identified this area for needed fishery improvement.

5. This plan should identify the need for a land exchange program whereby private land along creeks and streams (expecially Camas Creek) could be exchanged for other BLM land. No loss of watering would occur as selected access to the streams would be maintained.

6. Water quality was rated good in this plan. This does not necessarily mean a good fishery exists. Some specific fishery improvements should be identified.

7. We support an alternative which incorporates some of the above mentioned concerns. Given a choice of only those offered, alternative E with some modifications would appear best.

Carl Cooper

I am very glad to see the program of sale of isolated pieces of BLM ongoing. I believe that management will be more ~~so~~ easily organized with lands adjacent to one another. I also feel that each county needs as much revenue on the books as possible.

I would also like to note that I favor granting the Right of way for the Egin-Hamner Road to Fremont County to build a ~~so~~ farm to market road over the next few years.

12

COMMENT SHEET DRAFT MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name Gerald Dirk

Address 4046 Wanda, Ammon, Idaho

I appreciate the fine work accomplished by BLM in the production of the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plans. I find the plans to be very comprehensive and thought provoking. I agree with the recommendations and proposals made by BLM.

Good job BLM

Gerald Dirk

Please continue on back.

13

COMMENT SHEET DRAFT MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name Ruth Lee

Address 1987 Pine Circle, Idaho Falls, Id.

I would encourage your selection of designated areas for ORV use to minimize damage in improper areas. Also much greater education of these areas may help.

I like the idea of recreation trails such as Cross Creek. It would be beneficial to consider other areas where the public could benefit from that type of resource & focus use in those areas rather than improper areas.

Sagebrush burning & seeding seem to have a good benefit for long term range planning. Have you tried to coordinate with State & private lands to do the two controlled burnings so you can cover larger areas.

Please continue on back.

14

COMMENT SHEET DRAFT MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name Joyce Lyday

Address Rt 4 Box 146 Montpelier, Ida 83254

As a general overview, your document is good. Can't find anything to have any argument with. Shows alot of work and thought. As you know I am a strong advocate of the multiple use plan. I totally feel that any wilderness even the islands in the South Fork basin is lands to tightly and can not be managed well ~~or~~ easily. (Wilderness as Alternative C)

Please continue on back.

15

Chevron

Chevron U.S.A. Inc.
700 South Colorado Blvd., P. O. Box 599, Denver, CO 80201

Richard T. Hughes
Staff Analyst
Legislative and Regulatory Affairs

December 7, 1984

Draft RMP/EIS
Medicine Lodge Resource Area

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
Attention RMP/EIS Team Leader
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Gentlemen:

After reviewing the captioned document, I wish to submit the following comments for your consideration.

15-1 First, tabulation of the acreage shown by category of restriction in Table 2-1, page 2-23 of the EIS portion, shows that a total of 930,030 acres are located in the Resource Area. Elsewhere in the document the acreage within in the Resource Area is stated as 648,700. How do you account for this difference of 281,330 acres?

15-2 If the difference is acreage under which the mineral estate is in federal ownership, but the surface is not, I must question the BLM's authority to impose stipulations on the use of that surface. If all of these split-estate lands are within the standard stipulation category for each alternative this is probably not a problem. But if the BLM is attempting to more stringently restrict surface use of lands they do not own, I think the RMP/EIS should include a specific explanation of the reason for such stipulations and the specific legal authority under which they are to be imposed.

Secondly, I would like to express the opinion that the inventory of minerals, particularly oil and gas, is not very meaningful. The only real reference to oil and gas potential I was able to find was on page 3-6 of the EIS where it is stated that 99.6% of the area is "prospectively valuable" for oil and gas. I do not dispute that figure, but "prospectively valuable" is too broad a category for such information to have had any meaningful impact on your decision-making.

Central Region – Exploration, Land and Production

Even a publication as basic, and as widely known as USGS Circular 902 could have assisted you in identifying areas of high, medium, and low potential and thereby, given some indication of areas where the oil and gas values are more important than in other areas. I would suggest that such information is necessary before trade-offs can be analyzed in areas where oil and gas activity is to be restricted.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Richard T. Hughes
Staff Analyst
Legislative and Regulatory Affairs

RTH:at

17

AtlanticRichfieldCompany Public Affairs
555 Seventeenth Street
Denver, Colorado 80202
Telephone 303 293 7578

C.M. Moseley
Representative
Rocky Mountain Region

December 10, 1984

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Idaho Falls District
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

RE: **Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

Dear Mr. Frsndsen:

Atlantic Richfield Company appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Proposed Plan for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area in Idaho.

17-1 After reviewing the draft documents, it became apparent that the numbers used in the vsrious tabulations which reflect restrictions on energy and mineral resources do not add up. For instance, the acreage involved in planning totals 789,134 acres. However, on page 2-23, Tsble 2-1, under Alternative C, the acresge figures with regard to leasing total well over 900,000 acres. Another exsmple can be seen on page 7 of the Management Ares Descriptions. The summsry at the beginning states that the Medicine Lodge Management Ares 1 contsins 168,678 acres; however, under the Management Objectives it is stated that 176,900 scres will be managed for mineral exploration and development; further, page 8, Required Management Actions, states that 237,500 scres would be open to leasing with standard stipulations, while 31,900 scres would be open under seasonal stipulations, and 12,500 scres would be open with a "no surface occupancy" stipulation. According to my cslculations, it would appear that Management Area 1 contains 281,900 acres instead of 168,678. These inaccuracies are prevslent throughout the entire document.

16

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF MINES

WESTERN FIELD OPERATIONS CENTER
EAST 360 3RD AVENUE
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON 99202

December 14, 1984

Memorandum

To: RMP/EIS Team Leader--Idaho Falls Oistrict Office, Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Falls, Idaho

From: Supervisor--Minerals Involvement Section

Subject: Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area in Eastern Idaho

The Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement adequately address the impacts the plan alternatives would have on mineral resources on BLM lands. Alternative 8 is the plan that we prefer with respect to mineral management. It allows the largest amount of Federal lands in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area to be available for locatable, leasable, and salable minerals. Alternative C, your preferred alternative, could adversely affect two geothermal sites and one sand and gravel deposit in management area 9. Their locations are listed below and are from our Mineral Industry Location System (MILS). Additional mineral resource sites may occur which are not in our system.

Hawley Warm Springs - NW1/4NW1/4 sec. 25, T. 4 N., R. 40 E.

Unnamed geothermal site - SE1/4SE1/4 sec. 25, T. 4 N., R. 40 E.

Gravel pit - Sec. 17, T. 4 N., R. 40 E.

Thank you for the opportunity to review your plan.

O'Arcy P. Banister

In an effort to reconcile these differences, I called Don Watson, Team Leader. Mr. Watson explained that there had been some difficulties in preparing the figures for the draft plan and EIS. He told me that he would make sn effort to come to grips with this situstion and have it rectified in the final plan. My concern, however, is that the reason these numbers don't add up is because split-estate lands have been included in the figures. It is our understanding that the BLM is unable to place stipulations on the federal mineral estate where the surface is privately owned. If these numbers do not include this acreage, then the percentages mentioned in the Comparison of Alternatives section are incorrect. Mr. Watson said it was possible

17-2 thst the split-estate acresge was added into the acreages which are to be managed with standard stipulations. If they were, then it appears that more acreage is subject to seasonal stipulations than standard stipulations.

Aside from the acreage miscalculations, we appreciate thst the BLM chose to specify how much acreage was subject to the various restriction categories. We think the BLM is on the right track with their plan in that it is essential that the public lands are open to energy and mineral exploration snd development. We would like to suggest thst the BLM utilize the Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association Energy and Mineral Evaluation System to determine the geologic favorability of the Resource Area. This information could then be placed on a map which could be overlaid with the Management Area Prescriptions to determine tradeoff values. We further suggest that the BLM use the RMOGA Matrix System or the BLM Fluid Mineral Leasing Guidelines which utilize these rstings snd provide a bssis for determining the effects each alternative has on the ability of industry to explore for energy and mineral resources. We feel that by using these systems, the BLM will be better able to determine the impacts of their management decisions on subsurface resource activities. A copy of both the RMOGA systems is attached as well as the BLM Fluid Mineral Leasing Guidelines.

17-3 We would like to make on additional point regarding the areas closed to mineral leasing. It is not specified in the draft documents whether the areas closed to mineral leasing are formal withdrawals. The Robert G. Lynn decision (76 IBLA 383) specifies that if a decision is to be made to reject a lease offer, the record must clearly support that leasing, even with an NSO stipulation, is not in the public interest. The justification must be substantive and site-specific. If leasing in the area is determined not to be in the public interest, even with NSO, consideration should be given to formally withdrawing the lands involved. Only those areas that are withdrawn should be closed to oil and gas leasing. Further, the Bill J. Maddox decision (IBLA 83-229) specifies that the BLM must justify placing a NSO stipulation on an entire lease; when it is possible, less restrictive measures should be applied to portions of the lease where a NSO stipulation is not necessary.

In conclusion, the BLM should recompute the figures used throughout the draft EIS and plan in order to more clearly delineate which areas are open to leasing under standard stipulations and what areas are subject to more restrictive stipulations. It would prove beneficial if the BLM would use the RMOGA Energy and Mineral Evaluation System and Matrix System during the planning process in an effort to make tradeoff decisions and to present it logically.

We would be happy to discuss our concerns further with you. Please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

C.M. Moseley

CMM/ko

Attachments

19

United States Department of Agriculture — Forest Service — Intermountain Region — 324 25th Street Ogden, UT 84401

Reply to: 1950

Date: DEC 12 1984

Mr. O'Dell A. Frendsen, District Maneger
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Fells District Office
940 Lincoln Roed
Idsho Fells, ID 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

Thenk you for this opportunity to review and comment on the Drsft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impect Statement for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. The planning anelysis appeers to be reasonahly comprehensive, hut should include a couple of eress that might affect adjoining Netional Forest System lands.

19-1 We do not find sufficient mention ehout noxious weeds in the Range section and what the Bureau of Land Menagement's progrem is for control of such plants as leafy spurge, etc.

19-2 There is no mention of specific Forest or rangelend insect programs, such es: Mountain Pine Beetle, gresshoppers, etc. The plen should discuss the integrated pest management program.

19-3 The discussion of the East Indien Creek Forest Service ellotment on page B-33 is uncleer. Is the intent of the discussion to menage the adjecent puhlic land in accordence with the conclusions reached et the Cottonwood Cattle Associetion's March 1, 1983, meeting. For your information, those conclusions are listed helow:

1. The Bureau of Land Manegement approved e 3- to 5-day period of use for the cattle to he removed from the Forest at the end of the grazing seeson. All sgreed thet opening the fence gates and allowing the cattle to drift across the Bureeu of Land Management land hes less impect then herding 200 to 300 pairs ecross during one day.
2. The drift fence which separates the Forest end Bureeu of Lend Management would not be extended for the 1983 seeson. It was recognized that cattle will drift around the fence in Septemher. The allotment rider will hsve to herd the cettle off the Bureeu of Lsnd Management lend on e routine besis (every other day, excluding Sunday) efter drift starts.
3. Less cattle should he placed in the Indien Creek drsinage to reduce the occurrence of drift off the Forest.

FS-6200-11b (7/81)

18

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

DEC 10 1984

Mr. D'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Idaho Falls District
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 8340I

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

In response to the letter dated September I4, 1984, we have reviewed the Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area in eastern Idaho. Dur review was directed to whether the action described in the draft EIS involved matters within our jurisdiction by law or special expertise or had any potential impact on NRC licensed facilities. No potential effects were identified; therefore, we have no specific comments on the draft EIS.

We note that the Medicine Lodge Resource Area includes part of the U.S. Department of Energy Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL). We have assumed that you are working closely with DOE to ensure that your plan adequately reflects any potential impacts associated with INEL operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft document.

Sincerely,

Richard H. Vollmer, Director
Division of Engineering
Dffice of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

In the interest of a coordinsted epproach to the delineation of wolf recovery hahitet as discussed in the Affected Environment section of the DEIS, the Targhee National Forest hes not chosen to delineate habitet. In response to occesional unverifiable sightings, the Targhee hes chosen to defer any decision until the interegency wolf recovery plan is put forth. We believe this approech will ensure thst any designetion of lands is consistent with the wolf recovery team effort and the menagement of adjacent lands end that eny decision is coordineted hetween Regional and State offices.

JOHN P. (BUTT
Director, Planning and Budget

20

12-19-84

Dear B.L.M. folks,

As a native & resident of Idaho I am very concerned about the Medicine Lodge Resource Area.

I am requesting wilderness designation for the 39 islands on the Snake, protection for the North Junipers, & consideration for the elk wintering area near the St Anthony Dunes as well as consideration of the gray wolf population.

I further endorse either the Wildlife/Amenities Alternative E or the Committee for Idaho's High Deserts suggested compromise to prevent the 21% grazing increase in Prefered Alternative C. And finally please see that the final RMP/EIS include trade off studies between grazing costs/returns & sportsmen contributions & other cost considerations.

Lets keep Idaho Idaho!

Thank You,
Kristy Young

P.S.

I understand that ranchers, I used to have cattle, have a lot of impact on your decisions - however - they are not the future of this land & our decendants deserve to see this country as [redacted], for the most part, it still is!!

Also, anybody with any real foresight can see that Idahos Wilderness will be, & soon, the major new economic factor for the people here - please don't squander it on a few vested interests!

21

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Pacific Northwest Region
Westin Building, Room 1920
2001 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98121

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7619(PNR-RE)
DES 84/51

December 21, 1984

Memorandum

To: Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Falls District Office, Attention: RMP/EIS Team Leader, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

From: Acting Associate Regional Director, Recreation Resources and Professional Services, Pacific Northwest Region

Subject: Review of draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area (DES 84/51)

We have reviewed the subject document and have no objection to Alternative C, which is your preferred alternative. We support the resource area proposals described under Alternative C, especially:

1. Research Natural Area designation of Menan Butte.

2. Recommendation for study under the Wild and Scenic River Act for 61 miles of the South Fork Snake River.

21-1 We saw nothing under any alternative about study or special recreation designation for any portion of the Henrys Fork of the Snake River. The Henrys Fork has been designated by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture as a study river under the authority of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and we believe it should receive some mention in this report.

Frederick J. Bender

cc:
WASO-762

22

FREMONT-MADISON CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

BOX 328
ST. ANTHONY, IDAHO 83445

December 19, 1984

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Attn: RMP/EID Team Leader
Re: Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan

Dear Sirs:

At a recent meeting of the Fremont-Madison Cattlemen's Association, the membership voted to go on record strongly stating that they do not favor either an increase in the wilderness acreage or an increase in the numbers of the big game herds within the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan area.

Respectfully,

Roger J. Morris

Roger J. Morris
President
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FREMONT-MADISON CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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ST. ANTHONY, IDAHO 83445

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Bruce Barris	*Ken MacKay*
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23

United States Department of the Interior

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
RESTON, VA. 22092

In Reply Refer To:
WGS-Mail Stop 423

DEC 19 1984

Memorandum

To: RMP/EIS Team Leader, Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls, Idaho

From: Assistant Director for Engineering Geology

Subject: Review of resource management plan and draft environmental statement for Medicine Lodge Resource Area, Idaho

We have reviewed the subject document as requested in the notice of September 14 from the District Manager.

The environmental statement indicates a need for information on the ground-water resources of the Snake Plain Aquifer (p. 3-3). We suggest consulting publications of the U.S. Geological Survey, particularly the following:

(1) Stearns, H. T., Crandall, Lynn, and Steward, W. G., 1938, Geology and ground-water resources of the Snake River Plain in southeastern Idaho: U.S. Geological Survey Water-Supply Paper 774.

(2) Mundorff, M. J., Crosthwaite, E. G., and Kilburn, Chabot, 1964, Ground water for irrigation in the Snake River Basin in Idaho: U.S. Geological Survey Water-Supply Paper 1654.

These reports include maps showing depth to water, water table, transmissivity, and a flow net for the Snake Plain Aquifer. Additional data on specific locations may be available from the District Chief, U.S. Geological Survey, 230 Collins Road, Boise, Idaho 83702 (FTS 554-1750) or the project office at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, P.O. Box 2230, INEL, CF 690, Room 164, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401 (FTS 583-2438).

It would be useful also to reference the annual reports of the U.S. Geological Survey entitled "Water Resources Data for Idaho" for recent water years.

23-1 Since the undeveloped recreation sites of the Medicine Lodge Resource Area have deteriorated because of visitor abuse (p. 3-21), the statement should indicate whether adverse impacts on water resources may result. If hazards to the human environment may develop as a result of the deterioration, the possibilities of mitigation should be addressed.

James F. Devine

James F. Devine

24

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
ATTN: RMP/EIS Team Leader
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

December 20, 1984

Dear Sirs:

I have reviewed the Resource Management Plan for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area, and have comments related to the treatment of Research Natural Areas in the plan. According to Table 2-1, the proposals for this classification vary from 1,120 acres in the Preferred Alternative to 3,117 acres in Alternative E; I am omitting the A & B Alternative which include no acreage in RNAs.

As you know, the purpose of an RNA system is to recognize adequate ecosystem representation in a framework designed to insure that reference areas are available for research. Without reference areas, it is impossible to evaluate the effects of management actions except with respect to other manipulated areas. In effect, if RNAs are neglected, there is no standard by which to evaluate the overall effects of management decisions.

The treatment of RNAs in the plan gives the appearance of treating this special designation as a numbers game with no consideration given to what those numbers represent. With this criticism in mind, I would like to point out that each area was recommended to further the goal of adequate ecosystem representation with minimal conflicts with alternative uses. I would now like to specifically address each recommended area.

24-1 The North Menan Butte area has no conflicting uses, and includes several representatives of the shrub-steppe vegetation of the upper Snake River Plain. It would make an excellent addition to an RNA system, and would not duplicate any other proposed or established area. The St. Anthony Sand Dunes proposed RNA was intentionally located well within the dune system in order to minimize conflicts with other uses and to serve as a baseline area for evaluating the effects of management actions in the unigue dune ecosystem recognized by the proposed Nine Mile Knoll A.C.E.C. This dune system is also of historic interest to scientists since it was studied and reported on twenty years ago in a major scientific journal (Chadwick, H.W. and P.D. Dalke. 1965. Plant Succession on Dune Sands in Fremont County, Idaho. Ecology 46:765-780). The continuity of scientific research demands that a portion of this ecosysem be preserved in an unmanipulated condition for future studies.

Game Creek is a municipal watershed and therefore receives no grazing. It has no other conflicting uses and includes representation of aspen and coniferous forest types along the eastern edge of the Teton Basin: It too would make an excellent addition to an RNA system.

24-2 I would like to emphasize that there is no duplication of ecosystems in these areas, and that the relatively small acreage involved (3000 acres) constitutes an efficient and reasonable proposal for a nearly adequate RNA system for the Resource Area. I say 'nearly adequate' for one reason only. In addition to the above areas, I strongly urge that one of the

24-2 many islands within the Snake River A.C.E.C. also be proposed as a RNA. No inventory work has yet been conducted in this area, and I have no specific island to recommend at this time but it is known that this is one of the few areas in Idaho where riparian communities dominated by narrow-leaf cottonwood are represented. It is also one of the few major riparian zones in Idaho, and probably in the west, which has perhaps not been so severely impacted that it would no longer qualify as a Research Natural Area. The final selection of an island to receive RNA designation should await the results of an inventory of this area, and should take into consideration conflicts with other uses.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the RMP. In summary, I would like to emphasize that RNAs are management tools in a way in which those who have never been to a place where no examples of the pre-settlement ecosystems remain can never fully understand. We have an opportunity now to provide for the research needs of the scientists of the future, and they will be the ultimate judges of how adequately we addressed this need.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Caicco

Steven L. Caicco, Botanist/Ecologist
Idaho Natural Heritage Program
4696 Overland Road, Suite 518
Boise, ID 83705

Tenneco Minerals
A Tenneco Company

25

P.O. Box 27F
Lakewood, Colorado 80227
(303) 987-6200
TWX 910 320 2934

December 19, 1984

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls Oistrict Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Attn: Medicine Lodge Resource Area
RMP/EIS Team Leader

Oear Sir:

On behalf of the Minerals Exploration Coalition, geologists at Tenneco Minerals Company have reviewed the draft resource management plan/environmental impact statement for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area (MLRA). We appreciate that the study recognizes the oil and gas potential of this resource area, which includes part of the Wyoming-Idaho Overthrust Belt, and we strongly support the opening of acreage to oil, gas and geothermal leasing. However, we must challenge
25-1 the seasonal or total restriction of surface occupancy that precludes testing of leasable commodities by practical drilling methods. This, in effect, closes the land to development of energy reserves. Similarly, restriction of access by seasonal or total closure to vehicles may prohibit an economic exploration program. For these reasons we support alterative B, which places maximum acreage open to leasable minerals with minimum restriction of surface occupancy and access. We recognize the need for protection of the environment and preservation of wildlife habitats, and feel this can be accomplished by reasonable regulation and cooperation, perhaps on a case-by-case basis.

25-2 Our second concern is the failure of the plan to identify metallic minerals as a resource of the Medicine Lodge area. In 1984 Tenneco Minerals Company initiated minerals exploration in several areas within the MLRA. Our work is incomplete and on-going. Although our data are not available for public perusal, we are willing to discuss with you our reasons for considering this area a favorable one for mineral exploration. The following comments support our position and are pertinent to selection and implementation of a mangement plan.

New geologic models for gold and silver exploration, which have led to recent major discoveries in the western U.S., indicate that two geologic environments within the Medicine Lodge area are potential hosts for precious metals deposits. The geology of the northern part of the area is characterized by felsic volcanics and rhyolite domes of the Snake River-Yellowstone volcanic province, which includes the Island Park Caldera (Mitchell and Bennett, 1979a; Rember and Bennett, 1979a; Hamilton, 1965). The association of felsic caldera complexes

SELECTED REFERENCES

Hamilton, W., 1965, Geology and Petrogenesis of the Island Park Caldera of Rhyolite and Basalt, Eastern Idaho: U.S.G.S Prof Paper 504-C.

Mitchell, V.E., and E.H. Bennett, 1979a, Geologic Map of the Ashton Quadrangle, Idaho (1:250,000): Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Mitchell, V.E., and E.H. Bennett, 1979, Geologic Map of the Driggs Quadrangle, Idaho (1:250,000): Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Rember, W.C., and E.H. Bennett, 1979, Geologic Map of the Oubois Quadrangle, Idaho (1:250,000): Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Rytuba, J.J., 19B1, Relation of calderas to ore deposits in the western United States: Ariz. Geol. Soc. Oigest, Vol. 14.

Tenneco Minerals

and ore deposits only recently has been recognized by economic geologists. The validity of the association is demonstrated by the current development of the Thunder Mountain deposit in Valley County, Idaho and by production from numerous deposits in the western U.S. (Rytuba, 19B1). Known mineral occurrences in volcanic rocks of the MLRA include several prospects west of Kilgore. We have examined these in the field, and feel that further exploration is warranted. Active mineral claims are currently held in this area by a major mining company as well as several private individuals.

The southeastern part of the resource area is characterized geologically by low-angle faults in Mesozoic and Paleozoic sediments, overprinted by Tertiary felsic volcanism and intrusions (Mitchell and Bennett, 1979b). These features make this area favorable for the occurrence of gold deposits such as those at Carlin, Nevada or the newly recognized mineralization associated with Tertiary-age low-angle faulting in Nevada and Arizona. Known mineralization occurs just outside of the resource area in the Caribou Mountain Oistrict, Bonneville County. The potential for discovery of mineral deposits within this environment has only recently been recognized and has not been adequately tested.

In summary, we support the opening of public land to leasable and locatable minerals. We feel that metallic minerals must be identified as a potential resource of the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. We support a multiple-use plan that will allow economically viable mineral and energy exploration without unreasonable restriction of access and surface occupancy until the full resource potential of the area is tested. To this end, we support management alternative B.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this management plan. If you require further information on the mineral potential of this area, please contact us.

Respectfully,

TENNECO MINERALS COMPANY

Cynthia Cunningham

Cynthia Cunningham
Geologist

CC/rf
Attachment

26

12/19/84

BLM, Idaho Falls Dist.
Idaho Falls, Id.

Re: Medicine Lodge Resource Area EIS

Dear Sir:

I am an Oregon attorney, ornithologist, fisherman, backpacker and conservationist who spends much time enjoying the natural resources of Idaho. Following are my comments on the EIS.

1. WILDERNESS - all 39 of the Snake River Islands should be designated wilderness. No island ecosystem is represented in the NWPS. Further, any allowance of development would severely compromise the integrity of federal bald eagle recovery efforts.

The BLM should make a special wilderness recommendation to the Interior Secretary (Reg. Section 201 - FLPMA) for the W. Juniper Mtns., a splendid 4000 acres removed from the Sand Mtn. WSA. The RMP all-season ORV closure is not sufficiently protective to prevent increased mineral activity; also all future grazing should be

permanently stopped, to protect rare plants like Oenothera pzimrophila. This closure should affect the whole area and not just the adjacent 1420 acre RNA.

2. WILD & SCENIC RIVERS-
I wholeheartedly support the recommendation of the S. F. Snake River for Wild & Scenic River study status.

3. GREY WOLF HABITAT-
26-1 The EIS is deficit in attention paid to constraints necessary to protect the gray wolf population in Management Area 1. The area suffers greatly from extensive overgrazing, soil erosion, and riparian zone damage. The condition of the area is declining rapidly, which will adversely affect big game, fishers, and consequently the remnant wolf population.
I support the BLM recommendation for Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized classification of at least 5920 acres.

4. ALTERNATIVES-
I can only support Alt. E - or C. I. H. D.'s compromise alternative to prevent the 21% grazing increase in Preferred Alt. C.
I actively disagree with the biased, but basic agency assumption that every commodity increase is in the public interest. Where is any effective
26-2 cost-benefit analysis to support your conclusions?
I do not approve of my tax dollars being used to subsidize an already depressed meat industry, while such activity will degrade the habitat and damage wildlife.
The final RMP/EIS must include clear and precise trade-offs studies between
26-3 grazing costs/returns and sports/recreation contributions to the local economy.
Also the final RMP/EIS should show by alternative the estimated budget
26-4 allocations & public benefits for grazing, mineral extraction, recreation, wildlife, and watershed. Otherwise the plan is not legally sufficient and indefensible under NEPA and FLPMA. Sincerely,

Jeffrey Cook Esq.
450 SE Hyperion
SANDY, OR 97055

27

CELSIUS ENERGY COMPANY

79 SOUTH STATE STREET • P.O. BOX 11070 • SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84147 • PHONE (801) 530-2600

December 21, 1984

D'DELL A FRANDSEN
DISTRICT MANAGER
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
940 LINCOLN RDAD
IDAHD FALLS ID 834D1

RE: Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement
Medicine Lodge Resource Area
Sand Mountain, Snake River Islands, North Menan Butte,
Snake River, and Nine Mile Knoll

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

Celsius Energy Company welcomes the opportunity to participate in the Land Management Resource Planning Input Program for Medicine Resource Area. Celsius Energy Company is a wholly owned affiliate of Mountain Fuel Supply Company (Questar) of Salt Lake City, Utah. Celsius believes there is high favorability for oil and gas potential within the above listed areas and a multiple use concept should be applied within their boundaries.

The Medical Lodge Resource Area lies within the northern portion of the Idaho-Wyoming-Utah Thrust Belt Province. The region is one of the most significant hydrocarbon provinces that has been located in the United States during the past 10 years. The tremendous potential of the Idaho Overthrust has gone unrecognized for a number of years but is now the subject of extensive industry exploration.

Celsius Energy Company and its partners have been actively exploring these areas by conducting both seismic and geological field programs the last two summers. All evaluations, to this point in time, reaffirm our keen interest in exploring and developing hydrocarbon resources within the region with one wildcat already scheduled.

We believe that exploratory operations and developments within the above listed areas can be conducted without compromising the present environment qualities. Again it is recommended that a multiple use concept for public lands be applied.

We would be willing to meet with you at your convenience but request that any proprietary information we disclose be kept strictly confidential.

Best regards,

Thomas C. Chidsey

Thomas C. Chidsey
Senior Geologist

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

28

Dear Friends,

I am responding to your draft Medicine Lodge RMP/EIS. I am an Idahoan who has learned to appreciate many of Idaho's BLM lands for their scenic and recreational values, and I have gained a perspective about range management from talking with BLM experts in the Boise Area, from talking with other desert activists in the Boise Area, and from reading the book by Denzel Ferguson called Sacred Cows at the Public Trough. Although all of my visits to BLM lands so far have been in the Boise District or in eastern Montana, I think I am as competent as anyone is likely to be to comment on an EIS for BLM lands. Perhaps the issues are a little different in eastern Idaho than they are in areas I've been to so far, but the similarities must outweigh the differences.

1) A 21 per cent grazing increase on public lands with $1.4 million in range manipulations is irresponsible. Cattle grazing causes unacceptable levels of erosion on public lands. Large portions of Idaho are going to be reduced to bare rock eventually if cattle grazing isn't stopped. Range manipulations benefit no one except a few cattlemen and the benefit is considerable in terms of taxpayer dollars. Those range manipulations will never pay for themselves, and every taxpayer should be irate. That kind of expenditure at a time when attempts are being made to balance the federal budget goes against the trend of the times, and it's a good trend.

2) All 39 Snake River Islands might as well be wilderness. This sounds like an area I can envision and like bald eagle habitat. Wilderness for the islands and/or Wild and Scenic River status for the river there would prevent privatization

and development of the islands and would put an island ecology into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

3) Not having been to the St Anthony Dunes, I have trouble making a decision on whether anything there is what I consider wilderness. ORV closure of the North Juniper Area and wilderness should be given serious consideration. I would hate to visit the area some day, which will likely happen, and find that an area of high recreational value was excluded from wilderness consideration.

4) BLM Special Recreation Management Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern proposals along the South Fork of the Snake and the St Anthony Dunes sound like good ideas. Seasonal vehicle closures on elk wintering habitat in the St. Anthony Dunes area sounds like a good idea also.

5) Reports of overgrazing and the well-known forms of erosion associated with cattle grazing in gray wolf habitat in Management Area 1 near the Italian Peak Roadless Area of Targhee National Forest are the sort of reports that turn people like me against cattle grazing. The BLM's recommendation for Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized classification of 5920 acres in this area sounds like a small, but nevertheless commendable step in the right direction toward sensible management of this area.

6) I endorse the Committee for Idaho's High Desert's alternative management plan for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. No increase in grazing in any resource area is in the public interest by any stretch of the imagination. The final RMP/EIS should include trade-off studies between grazing costs/returns and sportsmen contributions to the regional economy, and it should clearly show what taxpayer dollars in the area are being spent for and who benefits by how much.

Bill Leisi, President
P.O. Box 197
Potlatch, Idaho 83855
Telephone (208) 875-1417

Shirley E. White, Secretary
P.O. Box 122
Plummer, Idaho 83851
Telephone (208) 875-1417 (Work)

IDAHO WILDLIFE FEDERATION

29

Russell W. Heughins, Vice President
700 E. Fairview Ave., Sp. 68
Meridian, Idaho 83642
Telephone (509) 335-5139 (Office)

Lee Daly, Treasurer
P.O. Box 1395
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814
Telephone (208) 667-6290 (Work)

December 24, 1984

O'dell A. Frandsen, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

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Art Manley 1966-1968
Bill Reynolds 1963-1966
Ernie Day 1961-1963
Heber Smith 1959-1961
Ted Wegner 1944-1959
R. C. Cole 1936-1941

Re: Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, Idaho Falls District, Draft, 1984

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

The Idaho Wildlife Federation (IWF) appreciates the opportunity to comment upon the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS). Review and consideration of the RMP/EIS, however, leads to only one conclusion -- disappointment. The document is nothing more than a Sears Catalogue of "goodies," a potpourri of proposed "actions," an enumeration of intentions (good or bad) supposedly applicable to the 648,700 acres of public lands addressed in the RMP/EIS. Unfortunately, the RMP/EIS provides no site specific management guidance for subsequent "activity planning" as is proposed in the document. Thus, a meaningful plan does not emerge, assessment of environmental impacts is not done - it is impossible.

29-1 Compliance with applicable law as is claimed in the RMP/EIS, p 1-2, is little more than wishful thinking. Neither does the document serve ".... to satisfy the intent of the 1975 U.S. District Court approved agreement (Case 1983-73) between BLM and The Natural Resources Defense Council, et. al, in which BLM agreed to consider the various intensities of livestock grazing in its decision making process." Were the authors of the RMP/EIS to understand the Court's Decision, they would find the Court is most specific in requiring site specific attention to the matter of livestock grazing on the public land. Far more is required than the claimed agreement ".... to consider the various intensities of livestock grazing..." in the decision making process. Quite the contrary is true. Indeed, the very applicability of livestock grazing is challenged, it is to be scrutinized and assessed relative to its accommodation and impact(s) upon the public's land. This is not done in the RMP/EIS.

The Draft RMP/EIS is seriously flawed in many other respects, some may be identified as follows:

29-2 1. Removal of all livestock from the RMP/EIS area is not practical or reasonable, therefore warrants little comment except that such a proposal and assessment is necessary to establish baseline data by and from which the preferred plan and alternatives may be judged. Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, does not serve this purpose thereby making it impossible to compare or judge the various courses of action - there is no baseline data.

29-3 2. No baseline data is given. Apparently a vegetative inventory was made as well as a soils inventory. However, nowhere in the RMP/EIS do these data appear (in addition to judging and comparing alternatives) as they may or may not have been utilized to determine: management area, land use classification, allotment categorization, initial or projected stocking level, allocation of forage production or other "decision" of resource capability to accommodate use(s) over time. It would seem, therefore, that the time (personnel) and monies (tax dollars) utilized to collect these data was an academic exercise. One must ask, do these data and other essential resource information really substantiate the proposed activities outlined in the RMP/EIS?

29-4 3. The RMP/EIS appears in noncompliance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), Section 1D2(a), (1) and (2). Although the RMP/EIS talks to "Land Ownership Adjustments," pp. 32-34, and elsewhere in the text, no definitive "fact" is established that clearly demonstrates disposal ".... will serve the national interest." This is specifically applicable as regards any disposal for further agricultural development. It seems BLM chooses to ignore its own economic analysis of further agricultural development in southern Idaho as well as other creditable analysis on this matter. Facts do not support BLM's proposed disposal of public land except, perhaps, exchanges with the State of Idaho, other federal agencies, or private parties to adjust boundaries or consolidate ownership to enhance administration and management goals and objectives. Greater exposure of any land transfer proposals to public comment must be made prior to any land disposal.

29-5 4. As noted in prior text, allotment categorization is of concern. That is, what data prompted such decision and who made the decision? Was there any public involvement beyond the livestock industry sought and incorporated into the classification decision?

Allotment categorization and land use classification as well appears, from the data presented, an arbitrary and capricious BLM "action" absent any public exposure and comment and lacking resource data to substantiate such action.

29-5 While the public might go along with such prioritization and classification scenario, there could be significant dissent. IWF, as example, takes exception to BLM's concept of allotment categorization as not fulfilling their fiduciary responsibilities under applicable law. IWF likewise questions the "policy" as is enumerated

29-6 relative to land use classification, i.e., moderate use class, as being ".... to provide for the production or use of forage, timber, minerals and energy, recreation, or other consumptive resources while maintaining or enhancing natural systems." Does this "policy" meet the intent of FLPMA, Section 1D3 (c) and Section 2D2?

29-7 5. The RMP/EIS at p. 3-19, states that: "... For the Medicine Lodge Resource Area as a whole, the present erosion situation is within normal and acceptable levels." By what criteria is this statement made? What data substantiates this contention? And, elsewhere in the text, who and what data substantiates the claim that "5 tons per acre" soil loss is an acceptable loss? Desertification is a problem in Idaho on BLM administered public lands. Further consideration and assessment of this impact must be addressed and not written off as "acceptable."

6. The RMP/EIS establishes beyond doubt that the Medicine Lodge Resource Area possesses significant fish, wildlife and recreation resources. BLM is to be commended in recognition of these inherent public values. Certain on-going or proposed activities are identified, but IWF questions BLM's commitment to these resources where statements as are found on pp. 4D-41 are made - it would seem BLM's concern may be more rhetorical than real. A more definitive BLM commitment is required to assure continued diversity, viability, protection, and management

29-8 of these resources. Where and how have the Idaho Department of Fish and Game management plans been incorporated into BLM's decision making? What, where, and how has consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service, as required by the Endangered Species Act, been sought and incorporated into BLM's decision making?

7. IWF questions BLM's rationale for not recommending wilderness classification of the Sand Mountain and Snake River Island Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). Such lands are unique and once lost, never can be regained. Furthermore, insufficient data or program direction is given to assure BLM can manage these lands, short of wilderness classification, in a manner to protect their unique value.

The foregoing is by no means a complete enumeration of "flaws" of the RMP/EIS as viewed by the Idaho Wildlife Federation. The evident effort to accommodate livestock, ORV, agricultural, mineral or other similar consumptive use of the RMP/EIS area places other resource values in jeopardy.

In sum, the Idaho Wildlife Federation finds the Medicine Lodge Resource Man-

Affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation

agement Plan/Environmental Impact Statement unacceptable. It simply is not a plan of sufficient detail to provide the necessary guidance and/or constraint for land use allocation and/or exclusion of use(s) in accordance with land capability. The only alternative having merit, in concept at least, is Alternative E. In the final analysis, insufficient data or no data is given to substantiate the resource management plan. Hence, the environmental impact statement is meaningless - the RMP/EIS is not valid. 29-9

Sincerely,

William R. Meiners

William R. Meiners, Chairman
Natural Resources Committee

WRM:mjm

cc: Bill Leisi, President, IWF
Russ Heughins, Vice President, IWF
Ed Stockly, Executive Oirector, INRLF
Johanna Wald, NROC

Hagenbarth Livestock (HL)
P.O. Box 1128
Dillon, Mt. 59725
December 24, 1984

General comments on the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

In assessing these comments, it is imperative to recognize the school of thought from which they originate. The livestock industry in the western states has depended on federal range to prepare their products for the market place for more than 100 years. The knowledge gained by the livestock man has been acquired through practical experience. We are grass growers and use our livestock to harvest the crop. It should be recognized that the basic knowledge we have can be built on and improved by scientific studies, but can never be replaced by such studies. There is no substitute for experience. This is not to say that we are always right and never abuse the environment, rather that our comments should be given their due consideration based on the knowledge from which originate.

HL recognizes abuse of federal range as the basic reason for the EIS. But we resoundly reject the premise that grazing is soley responsible. Grazing along with wildlife, recreation, industry, and several government agencies have all participated in the factors causing the downward trend of the western rangelands over the past 100 years. The true livestock man is proud of the land he uses. This land has been abused in some places, but is untouched compared to the West Coast and that part of the nation east of the plains states. HL recognizes the time and effort spent by th BLM in developing an EIS. We realize the importance of the EIS approval so all can get back to work managing the environment instead of defending our reputations and credibility.

This is the second EIS that HL has been affected by. The team of resource specialists who formulated this document should be congratulated for a job well done. This EIS is not offensive to me as a livestock man, it is easy to read and the basic theories are sound. The preferred alternative is the only realistic choice which would protect the rangeland and satisfy all the different segnents of society, not to mention the courts. This has been a hard job and it has been well done. We disagree with a few minor management policies and objectives, but this is understandable for our focus is much smaller than the resource team has the privilege of using.

1S2S Malad
Boise, IO B370S
21 December 19B4

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID B3401

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The following are my comments to the Medicine Lodge draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. I support the alternative proposal of the Committee for Idaho's High Oesert for this very important area. I feel it is the only alternative which is realistic yet protects ecological parameters. I have the following specific comments:

- I feel all 39 of the Snake River Islands need wilderness designation to protect important cottonwood riparian habitat. It would serve as representation of an island ecology in the National Wilderness Preservation System and would not compromise bald eagle recovery plans.
- I support the BLM recommendation for congressional study of the south fork of the Snake River as a Wild and Scenic River. This ecosystem is the best area in the Idaho-Montana-Wyoming region for bald eagle recovery and Wild and Scenic designation would maintain this area.
- I support the BLM Special Recreation Management Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern proposals for the south fork and St. Anthony Dunes areas.
- I think grazing should be stopped in the North Junipers and urge the BLM to make a special wilderness recommendation to the Interior Secretary for this area. The area offers the only opportunity for primitive recreation in the St. Anthony Dunes and is host to a rare and fragile plant community.
- I support the BLM recommendation for Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized c lassification for 5920 acres in the Management Area 1.
- I urge the BLM to pay proper attention to the gray wolf population in Management Area 1 near the Italian Peak Roadless Area (per the Endangered Species Act).
- I feel the final RMP/EIS should include studies on grazing costs versus recreation economic contributions to regional economy. I would also like to see estimated budgets for grazing, mining, wildlife, recreation, and other multiple uses broken out by alternative.

In summary, I support the Committee for Idaho's High Oesert proposal and I thank you very much for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Susanne Vader

Susanne Vader

Under the preferred alternative, only B00 acres were included in the transfer class in Management Area 3. There are two small parcels in Area 3 which were not included, and should be in our opinion. Also there is the possibility of a large trade between ourselves and the BLM which would meet landowner adjustment criteria. By having these lands in the transfer class under the EIS, it would make exchange much easier. The two small parcels are as follows: T13NR38E, Section 35, W½SW, SWNW, 120 acres; T12NR38E, Section 2, Lots 3 & 4, 45.32 acres. These parcels do not fit into a contiguous grazing unit and are managed separately by the individual leesees. 31-1

The Beaver Creek Allotment (5002) under selective management is classified as custodial. This allotment only has 14% federal ownership comprising tracts of land ranging from 160 to 9 acres. The Camas Meadow Allotment (5012) is 51% BLM and is classified as under intensive management. All but one source of water lies on deeded lands in Camas Meadows. We lease Beaver Creek, Camas Meadow, along with Antelope Valley (5001) in the Medicine Lodge Resource District. We are very interested in trading out of Camas Meadow for BLM lands in Beaver Creek. The BLM land in Beaver Creek is as follows: T12NR37E, Section 29, S½NE, N½SE, SESW, 200 acres; Section 31, Lot 1, 41.29 acres;Section 32, SE, W½NW, SWNW, 280 acres; T12NR36E, Section 25, E½SW, portions of the SWSW, 114.58 acres; Section 35, portions of the SENE, NWSE, 15 acres. Deeded land of HL in the Camas Meadow Allotment which may be available for a possible exchange is found in the following sections: T12NR38E, Sections 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21; T12NR37E, Section 24. These exchanges would benefit all involved. HL was asked to submit a land list earlier, but failed to do so. The above land comprises the requested list and hopefully can be included in the final draft of the EIS and be classified as transfer lands. This would make any exchanges much easier.

The decisions of the team as they relate to the selective management of our allotments are correct. The small percentage of BLM ownership, the numerous isolated BLM tracts, and the intermingled ownership of lands in Beaver Creek and Antelope Valley would be hard to manage by either the leesee or the BLM in any category other than custodial. HL would like to assist the BLM in developing the Camas Meadow allotment, which is under intensive management. With the installation of one well, one crossfence, and a carefully planned sagebrush control program, the Camas Meadow Allotment could become a showcase for leesee-lessor co-operation in developing its tremendous potential for both wildlife and livestock.

After many years of range development in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area, HL believes that the projected increase of only 310 AUM's in 20 years on 50,017 acres is too conservative and a greater cost 31-2

effective potential exists which would benefit both wildlife, grazing, and recreation. The management objective of full fire suppression on 58,680 acres in Area 3 is of concern. HL is hopeful that this objective will in no way inhibit the use of controlled
31-3 burns to re-establish the potential plant community in areas where sagebrush has become too dense.

One management objective not present in the EIS which must be included is the control of noxious weeds. In Area 3 there is a potentially explosive infestation of spotted knapweed and leafy spurge in and around Spencer and along Beaver Creek. These infest-
31-4 ations are on private, city, county, railroad, state, forest, and BLM lands. All landowners in the area will have to address this problem or the area's potential for recreation, wildlife, and grazing will be severely diminished. Only a few times were noxious weeds mentioned in the EIS and their control is essential if any long term objectives are to be realized.

The analysis of the rangeland using an ecological sit inventory in comparison to a potential plant community is one way to establish a base from which to work. The potential plant community is basically theory and this should be recognized. Before man began impacting these lands, the plant community was constantly changing, as an area became abundant in brush, its suceptability to wildfire, natural disease, or insect infestation increased until the area finally burned or was biologically controlled. As the brush increased, the grasses decreased. After a fire the grass would re-establish and the cycle would start over. The plant community in this area was constantly changing and for only a short time during this cycle did a potential plant community exist. When man arrived the whole cycle was changed with the presence of livestock for longer periods of time and the suppression of fire. Thus the cycle has been broken and the potential plant community will probably not be seen on these ranges again.

It is important to recognize in these native ranges that the potential plant community is the range condition from which downward range trend begins. It is our observation that sagebrush will always increase on these native ranges under any condition, but noticeably faster where the decreasing species are being grazed or overgrazed. In the long term, range trend is always downward from the potential plant community until such time that the brush is controlled and the cycle begins again with a rejuvenated potential plant community. Range trend as it is used in the EIS can only be static or upward on the short term unless it is a response to restoration of the potential plant community via brush control. The length of this range cycle is controlled by

many variables including climatic conditions and range uses. What is important is that a range should not become deteriorated to the point where the potential plant community cannot be rejuvinated naturally after brush control. Times when native range cannot be rejuvinated can come after extreme livestock use, a hot range fire, or infestation of noxious weeds. Livestock numbers and periods of use can be adjusted to lengthen the range cycle and keep the short term range trend static. But it must be recognized that at some point, no adjustment in numbers or use periods will help and brush control is inevitable and it becomes cost effective to re-establish the potential plant community and begin the range cycle again. We formed our analysis of this range cycle after 100 years of livestock experience in the Kilgore-Spencer areas. The validity of the analysis may not be correct for areas with different climates and different species of increaser and decreaser plants.

The grizzly bear and the grey wolf are part of the old west, along with the herds of buffalo and the elk grazing in the praires. Their environment does not include man and has been destroyed by man in almost all of the lower 48 states. The grizzly is incompatible with mans multiple use of the range resource, be it livestock or recreation. This has been demonstrated in the Island Park area the last few summers. What is going to happen to these two species is a very tough question and we have no answers, but to expand their territories into areas of historical multiple use is unrealistic and will not work.

The only comment we have on forestry in relation to the EIS is on what we have observed in the Antelope Valley Allotment. Several small parcels have been harvested. After harvest a cat was used to push up windrows of dirt and trash to help establish seedlings. This appears to be what the BLM was doing and is similar to what the USFS did on Howard Creek. We are not timber experts, but we do not condone such a massive disturbance of highly erosive soils in a high run-off area and on a slope. What is even more alarming is the fact that these disturbances were not on contour and the potential for erosion and soil loss is tremendous.

HL recognizes that there is a conflict between livestock and riparian habitat, but is resistant to the premise that grazing is the sole cause and impact involved. Wildlife, recreation, mining, timber, and water development have all contributed to the damage done to our riparian habitat. Nature has responded to the pressure riparian habitat receives by evolving species of grasses, willows, and forbs which are prolific under extreme conditions. We all must be aware of the extreme pressure we put on this habitat and respond to these areas when they begin to deteriorate. The resource team has done a good job in identifying alternatives to

relieve livestock pressure, ie.,alternate water sources and changes in periods of use. We do not like fencing. The terrain and the kind of fence needed to keep livestock off riparian habitat leads to an expensive project which would ultimately impact wildlife and recreation access. If fences are to be constructed, it should be for livestock distribution which would aid in riparian habitat protection.

HL would like to comment on the restrictions in the EIS placed on structural improvements. On the higher elevations in the resource area where snow is a problem, a fence must be constructed correctly and maintained properly if the improvement is to have longetivity. This means some type of let down fence. Once a fence is constructed, the maintenance responsibility falls upon the leesee. Some leesees do not take this seriously, but we do and so does the BLM. HL employees spend five months a year maintaining 127 miles of fence in Clark County at a tremendous expense. It costs a lot of added time, effort, and money to construct and maintain a fence that has a poor right of way. The BLM restrictions on page B-5 in regard to fence line clearing should include mechanical clearing. A fence
31-5 line does not have to be cleared to bare soil, but all brush must be removed on either side of the fence, and when this is done some soil will be exposed. To ask the leesee to do this by hand is ridiculous and costly. Both sides of a let down fence should be cleared periodically to ease put up and take down, allow the wires to be on the ground which decreases damage and eases the wildlife conflict in nonuse months. On page B-6 under roads, the BLM allows blading to the bare soil and further states, "Depending on the amount of traffic herbaceous vegetation could reestablish itself upon the new roads without imparing their function.". The same would hold true for a fence line in regard to herbaceous vegetation reestablishment.

In regard to wire height restrictions in wildlife areas, HL acknowledges that there is a conflict between fencing and wildlife. The wire height will decrease this conflict, but under certain circumstances these heights will not properly control livestock. We might add that there is a dual standard in fencing practices regarding wildlife between the government agencies,ie., the interstate and the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station fences.

We encourage the use of prescribed burns as does the EIS. Most of our allotments were burned thirty years ago with varying degrees of success. The brush always burned, but depending upon the conditions, the natural grass species could be damaged. This is a good tool but has to be properly used and the range rested properly.

Analysing the stocking rates on every allotment in the resource area at one point in time is a tremendous undertaking. After a brief analysis it is apparent that the research team relied on data

other than past preference and five year use. Several allotments received an increase in active preference under the preferred alternative. This has not been the case in other EIS's that I have read. Also several allotments have been decreased in active preference which is expected if the resource team is doing its job. The active preference in our allotments was adjudicated in 1966
31-6 and after 18 seasons of use, we question these figures. We have felt the preference for the Camas Meadow Allotment has been too low. The amount of feed left in this allotment is tremendous, and after improvements with better distribution the feed left will be unbelievable. Sagebrush density has increased dramatically over the last ten years, but this is only a natural cycle as described earlier. Several of these brush areas are located where little livestock pressure is seen. In this EIS, the setting of an active preference for any allotment should include a percentage range of adjustment which would accomodate any valid adjustments, upward or downward. An extended wet or dry cycle, an innacurate range analysis, or an extremely successful or unsuccessful range improvement could affect the available forage tremendously.

The Beaver Creek and Antelope Valley Allotments have such a small percentage of BLM that an analysis of the whole allotment based on BLM acres/AUM is very innaccurate. Most often the intermingled lands within an allotment have a greater potential than the BLM lands. Antelope Flat has deeded acres which are irrigated and produce better than 2 AUM's/acre. Beaver Creek does not have the potential that Antelope has, but much more than the BLM AUM's/acre multiplied by the total number of acres within the allotment would indicate. This intermingled ownership and small % of BLM ownership has been a real problem in the past, but has been recognized by the resource team and solved by these two allotments being classified as custodial.

Our allotment boundaries and acreages as described in the EIS are
31-7 innacurate. This has previously been brought to the attention of the BLM in regard to the 1966 adjudication. The actual boundaries of these allotments have been fenced for over thirty years. These discrepancies make it difficult to realistically analyse the stocking rates and could cause constant friction between the leesee and lessor as BLM personnel changes.

Another comment HL has is how the BLM defines an AUM and how they
31-8 charge for an AUM. The EIS definition of an AUM does little to solve the problem and probably complicates it. The last few grazing seasons HL has been grazing different classes of cattle on different allotments. The BLM recognizes that a yearling does not consume one AUM in one month, yet they insist on charging by the head and not the AUM. The BLM is selling AUM's and the cattle are

31-8 harvesting AUM's. This is very confusing to all involved and should be corrected. It is a well documented fact that different classes of cattle consume different fractions of an AUM during one months time.

HL would like to again recognize the time and effort the BLM and their resource team have put into this EIS. We feel that basically the job has been well done. We are anxious to co-operate with the BLM in developing the potential of our allotments. The development of these lands has been held up by the EIS. With the approval of the EIS, we can all get back to work and manage these lands as they should be managed.

32

439 Styner Avenue
Moscow, Idaho 83843
December 22, 1984

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
ATTN: RMP/EIS Team Leader
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Sir:

The following comments have to do with the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement and are concerned with Research Natural Areas (RNA's).

We are pleased that the Plan and EIS include the proposed Menan Buttes RNA (Page 20). We are very disappointed, however, that neither the proposed Cane Creek or St. Anthony Sand Dunes RNA's are included in the preferred alternative. In addition to these three proposed RNA's we suggest that one of the Snake River Islands in the WSA be set aside as a RNA. My letter of 2/20/84 to Mr. Frandson transmitting reports on recommended RNA's mentioned the need to include one of the Snake River Islands in the WSA as a RNA. Each of these proposed RNA's is discussed separately.

St. Anthony Sand Dunes

This has long been recognized as a unique area. The BLM recognized its uniqueness when it listed it as area 281 in "A Directory of Research Natural Areas on Federal Land of the United States of America" compiled by the Federal Committee on Research Natural Areas, 1968. The Sand Dunes have been proposed as a National Natural Landmark. Our Committee recommended that three sections of the area (Sections 19, 30, and 31, T. 8 N., R. 39 E.) be set aside as a RNA not only to include the unique geological situations and rare plants but also to serve as a baseline or reference area for studying the effects of ORV use on vegetation. We believe that it is very important to reserve a portion of the St. Anthony
32-1 Sand Dunes in an undisturbed condition in a RNA.

Although Page 20 does not show the St. Anthony Sand Dunes RNA in Alternative C, Page F-13 shows that it has been included in Alternatives C, D, and E.

Cane Creek

32-2 We suggest that Cane Creek is an excellent candidate RNA because it is a domestic supply watershed in an undisturbed condition. It is not grazed and includes forest types badly needed in a RNA network. If the area contains blue spruce (the 1968 list of RNA's on Federal land listed blue spruce in the Cane Creek area), this would fill a need in the Idaho RNA network; no other established or proposed RNA in Idaho contains blue spruce. We also need good aspen stands and the Cane Creek area contains good stands of aspen. The Douglas-fir type in Cane Creek may contain needed habitat types.

Although the Cane Creek proposed RNA is included in Alternatives D and E, it is not included in the preferred Alternative C. Because Cane Creek is an undisturbed watershed, we urge you to include the proposed Cane Creek RNA in the preferred Alternative.

Snake River Island

32-3 We suggest that one of the Snake River Islands in the WSA be designated as a RNA. We do not yet have narrowleaf cottonwood included in any established or proposed RNA. The Islands contain excellent stands of narrowleaf cottonwood. In addition, they may contain certain shrub species that are native to this part of Idaho and that are not included in a proposed RNA. Our Committee would like to work with the BLM to select a good island to represent the vegetation of this portion of the Snake River in a RNA.

All of the four proposed RNA's are located in areas where conflicts with other resources would be minimal. Three of the areas, Menan Buttes, St. Anthony Sand Dunes, and Snake River Islands, would be nominated for designation as ACEC's in the preferred Alternative. The fourth proposed RNA, Cane Creek, is in an ungrazed domestic water supply watershed. We hope that you will give favorable consideration to inclusion of these proposed RNA's in the preferred Alternative to serve the needs of research, education, and as reference or baseline areas.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this Plan and EIS.

Sincerely

Charles A. Wellner

Charles A. Wellner, Chairman
Idaho Natural Areas Coordinating Committee

33

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
ECOLOGICAL SERVICES
4620 Overland Road, Room 209
Boise, Idaho 83705

December 26, 1984

TO: District Manager, BLM, Idaho Falls, Idaho
(Attn: RMP/EIS Team Leader)

FROM: Field Supervisor, ES, FWS, Boise, Idaho

SUBJECT: Medicine Lodge Draft RMP and EIS, Idaho (EC 84/68)

These are our comments on the Draft Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Draft EIS transmitted to us by your letter of September 14, 1984.

Under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205, as amended), we reviewed the RMP and EIS for possible effects on Federal-listed threatened and endangered species. We agree that there will be some aspects of the plan under the "Preferred Alternative" that may affect the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, grizzly bear, and wolf. Contingent upon selection of the "Preferred Alternative" and under BLM's Planning Regulations, 43 CFR 1600 step 9, Monitoring and Evaluation, we request that BLM consider Formal Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Consultation should be considered when each action called for in the plan is about to be implemented. For example, we would expect to have a timely opportunity to review land transfers that may involve threatened, endangered, and candidate species or to review site specific management plans for bald eagle nests.

33-1 On page 41, last paragraph, we recommend that you delete "To the extent practicable." There should be no question that your management actions will be consistent with the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Ray Hebrecya
for John P. Wolflin

cc: FWS/EC, Washington, O.C.
FWS, AFA, R-1, Portland
FWS, SE, Boise (1-4-84-SP-236)

American Wilderness Alliance
4960 East Evans Avenue/Suite B/Denver, Colorado 80222/(303) 758-5016

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Working Together To
Conserve Wild America

Paul Fritz 34
Box 1772
Boise, Idaho 83701
December 23, 1984

District Manager
Idaho Falls District
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Rd.
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Sir:

As the Idaho Representative of the American Wilderness Alliance I wish to comment on the Medicine Lodge RMP/EIS.

We support alternative E Plan with the Committee for Idaho's High Desert's suggested compromise alternative to prevent the 21% grazing increase in alternative C. The final RMP/EIS should include trade off studies between grazing costs and returns and the sportsmen's gains to the regional economy. 34-1

We also support the following:

(1) Heeding the Endangered Species Act by allowing the gray wolf population to exist along the Idaho-Montana border, especially near the Italian Peaks roadless area

(2) The continued protection of the South Fork and the St. Anthony Sand Dunes areas, thus preserving the winter range for 3,000 elk.

(3) Wilderness status for the North Junipers, a 3,500 acre area near the Sand Mountain WSA

(4) Wild and scenic river status for the South Fork, with wilderness status for 39 of the Snake River Islands. The BLM should have authority for direct purchase or scenic easement funding to zone the private lands from subdivisions or mineral extraction.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Fritz
Paul Fritz

Rocky Mt. Timber wolf may visit Targhee trying to establish more of these animals. We are adamantly opposed to this and recommend that any mention of the wolf should be deleted from the plan.

Thank you for the chance to comment

Bill Siddoway

35

COMMENT SHEET DRAFT MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name R.K. (Bill) Siddoway
Address Box 39 St. Anthony, Id. 83445

I Compliment you on the management plan as a whole. You have considered all the different emotions involved with the use of the area. I also agree that alternative C should be the preffered alternative.

I also think that there is no need to classify the 9-mile area as an A.C.E.C., I think it should be managed as a moderate use area.

The area of established Sandhill Habitat Management area is beginning to have too much emphasis on wildlife over domestic livestock and other uses. Wildlife in the area is a very important resource but the production of food and fiber is far more important.

I supported sightings of the Gray wolf and

Please continue on back.

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36

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
REGION 6
1515 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls • Idaho • 83401

December 26, 1984

Mr. O'dell Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear O'dell:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game personnel have reviewed the Draft Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and Grazing Environmental Impact Statement. We have grouped our comments into two categories; general comments on the plan and comments pertaining to specific pages.

General Comments

The Idaho Falls District has produced a reasonably well balanced Resource Management Plan, and the EIS adequately addresses the environmental impacts of the alternatives. However, there is a general lack of specifics in the EIS and RMP. It is often difficult to assess the impact of the proposed action because we cannot determine what the proposed action is. Two examples of this confusion are land transfer and forest management.

Three land transfer categories are listed in the EIS: T-1, T-2 and T-3. These classes are not defined clearly. We are unable to determine how much land is scheduled for sale, exchange with private landowners, or exchange with state agencies. It is therefore difficult to assess the impact of transfer of 8,129 acres of federal land of which 5,694 acres are wildlife habitat as specified in the preferred alternative (Alternative C). The loss of nearly 5,700 acres of wildlife habitat concerns us. 36-1

The transfer of land from federal to private ownership nearly always results in the loss of wildlife and fisheries values. Land transfer is a permanent change with long term impacts on wildlife. We recommend that a one year (four season) review period be implemented for land transfers similar to the IDFG-BLM agreement on brush control projects.

Our preference in matters of land transfer is for land exchange with private landowners or state agencies. Land trades are a powerful wildlife and land management tool. Trades that block up BLM lands or BLM and state lands or preserve critical habitat areas (migration routes, winter range, etc.) can have significant benefits to wildlife and other resource values. We strongly recommend that the BLM emphasize land exchanges and only utilize land sales as a last resort in managing land transfers.

Most of the lands identified for transfer in the RMP are "isolated tracts." While these scattered parcels of land pose logistic and administrative difficulties for the BLM in managing public land they very often are important wildlife habitat. In many areas the BLM isolsted tracts are the only remnants of native range. In Management Areas 1, 2, and 4 these tracts are important sage grouse habitat and play a key role in maintaining sage grouse populations in areas of agricultural development. Antelope, hungarian partridge, pheasant and raptors are also important users of these isolated islands of native rsnge. We recommend the BLM minimize the sale of isolated tracts.

The following is a list of lands identified in the preferred alternative for transfer that have high wildlife values.

Specific parcels of concern include:

a. T2N, R40E -- This parcel is located in Meadow Creek Canyon, is used by wintering deer and is located inside the boundary of the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area.

b. T2N, R41E -This parcel is contiguous witb property recently purchased by the IDPG (Weeks purchase) and managed as part of the Tex Creek WMA. -

c. T4N, R35E and R36E -- These parcels provide cover refuge for pheasant and Hungarian partridge.

d. T10N, R34E; T11N, R34E, R35E and R36E; T14N, R44E -- These parcels are isolated tracts surrounded by private lands in antelope habitat. Antelope depredations (antelope utilizing standing or stored crops) are common in these areas. These parcels are valuable as refuges for animals that have been chased from private lands. These tracts are also important sage grouse habitat.

The preferred alternative specifies 11,330 acres of commerical timberland is available for timber harvest and an additional 9,848 acres of woodland are available for timber management. We basically agree with the silvacultural practices outlined on page 37 of the RMP although we recommend 800 foot rather than 600 foot leave strips between cutting units. In Management Areas 1, 3, 4
36-2 and 5 the RMP specifies that forest land will be intensively managed for timber production apparently without consideration for wildlife values (pages 7-14).

36-3 The RMP is deficient because it does not specify whicb tree species are to he harvested. It appears that about 60 percent of the acreage of commercial forest land is to be select cut, a practice commonly used in Douglas fir stands. We are opposed to the harvest of Douglas fir in this area in general and especially in Management Areas 1, 3, 4 and 5. The problems of Douglas fir regeneration in this region are well known. We view harvest of
36-4 Douglas fir as a timber mining operation because fir is lost and replaced by lodge pole pine. The loss of Douglas fir plant communities in the Upper Snake River Valley is a serious wildlife habitat problem. The proposed harvest of Douglas fir is a serious flaw in Alternative C.

Management Area 1 roughly conforms to Game Management Units 59 and 59A. Elk vulnerability to harvest in this area is high due to low cover ratios and high road density. Timber harvest on BLM land in this area will only exacerbate a serious problem in spite of the silvicultural practices outlined on page 37. We recommend the BLM reconsider its timber harvest plans in Management Area 1; avoid Douglas fir and minimize road construction.

In Management Area 3, timber harvest is planned in the Antelope Ridge area. This site has been identified as an elk calving and nursery area. We oppose timber harvest on Antelope Ridge and recommend that the area be removed from tbe timber base.

Timber harvest is Management Area 5 is scheduled in an area of extremely high elk vulnerability. Game Management Unit 60 has the higheat ratio of yearling bull elk in the harvest in the state. Loss of cover and increased access from sale activity will increase vulnerability and contribute to an already difficult situation. In addition, forest lands in Management Area 5 provide important calving habitat.

Under the preferred alternstive the RMP states there would he, "approximately 4,160 acres of big game winter range lost due to travertine mining. This activity removes sll vegetstion from the surface snd eventually goes to pstent to an individual. Reclamation may or may not follow mining" (page 4-21). Travertine deposits in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area occur in Management Area 1 (Lidy Hot Springs-Medicine Lodge Creek). The decline in the condition of big gsme winter rsnge and the large percentage (31 percent) of winter range currently in poor condition is identified in the RMP ss a serious problem in Management Ares 1. The loss of an sdditional 4,160 acres of winter range to travertine mining poses á threat to hig gsme populations in Area 1. We recommend that the loss of habitat due to travertine mining be mitigated or reclaimed.

36-5 There does not appear to be sny provision in the RMP for sn increase in tbe elk population in Management Area 5. All slternatives specified the same number of AUMs for elk wintering on the Sands HMP. This ststic number of AUMs for elk is appsrently a product of the Ssnds HMP which specifies that the elk herd will be maintsined at 2,000 animals on the winter range. We believe that this situation could lead to problems in the future that should be addressed in the RMP.

Information collected during the lsst five years in an intensive mansgement snd research effort on the Sand Creek elk herd indicstes thst the number of elk wintering on the Sands HMP can fluctuate independent of the trend in the elk population. In other words, in some years more elk come to the Sands winter rsnge even though the population size hss not changed. Therefore, it is very difficult, and indeed may he impossihle, to mansge for a "fixed" number of elk. We feel it is more ressonsble to msnage for a "range" of elk numbers on the Sands HMP.

In addition we suspect that there is adequste habitst for more thsn 2,000 elk in the Sands HMP ares. The "2,000 elk agreement" was not based on any qusntitative informstion and was made at a time (lste 1970's) when the elk occupied a much smaller winter range area than they presently do. In the late 1970's elk did not use areas south of the Poleline Road. Elk use was concentrated on private land. The "2,000 limit" wss s product of lsndowner concerns that elk use would adversely impact livestock forage. Todsy, a significant amount of elk use occurs south of the Poleline Rosd and elk use on privste land is probably lower than it was when the Sands HMP wss written, in spite of a larger elk herd.

In 1983 we initiated a study to determine the effect of elk winter use on livestock forage. Knowledge gained from this study should help us determine how many elk can winter on the Sands HMP without sdversely affecting livestock forage.

Therefore, we recommend that there should be some flexihility in the RMP to allow for moderate increases in elk AUM's. The RMP should identify the necessity of renegotiating the "2,000 elk limit" in light of the current situation snd the results of the elk-livestock range study.

Por several management areas the Plan states that a monitoring plan will be developed to ensure wildlife habitst is in satisfactory condition. We feel this is not only advisable, but necessary for multiple resource management. However, these plans should also include the corrective sction that would be tsken if habitat condition is found to be unsatisfactory.

36-6 We are confused about the two different levels of fire suppression: Can prescribed fire be used in sreas of total fire suppression? On page 25 there is an indication that prescribed fire cannot be used in fall fire suppression areas, yet other areas designated full fire suppression have controlled burns planned (pages 7-20).

We support the development of Habitat Mansgement Plans for Medicine Lodge Creek, West Slope Management Area, Table Butte, and the Snake River. Our experience with the Sands Habitat Management Plan indicates these plans can provide important management direction and reduce conflicts between different resource interest and user groups.

We are pleased by the direction to improve riparian conditions in the RMP particulary in Management Area 1. The loss of riparian communities through overgrazing in the Medicine Lodge drainage has adversely affected moose, beaver and fish populations. Improvement in this area is needed.

Specific Comments

36-7 1. Page 5 -- Under the moderste use clsss there is no mention of fish and wildlife use. Yet, in the Plan, areas classified for moderate use have projects such as hrush control for improving wildlife habitst. We feel recognition and responsibility to all resources is an obligstion for multiple use management. Therefore, fisb and wildlife use should be addressed in the moderste use class.

2. We support the off-road vehicle closure at the head of Medicine Lodge Creek (Map 5).

36-8 3. Page 8 -- The information presented in paragraph three implies that there will be timber sales on 1,184 acres with no consideration for wildlife values.

4. Page 8 -- We applaud the development of a water quality management plan for Indian Creek, Eddie Creek and Irving Creek.

5. Page 10 -- Paragraph 6 identifies maintenance of key elk calving areas as a management objective yet timber harvest is planned in a key elk calving area on Antelope Ridge.

6. Page 9, #5 -- Should clarify that bald eagle use and golden eagle use is primarily winter use.

7. Page 12 -- Timber harvesting in the Donut Hole area may conflict with grizzly bear use of this area. Four different grizzly bear used the Donut Hole area in the fall of 1984.

8. Page 12 -- We question the need for brush control in T4N and T5N, R33E, R34E and R35E. In general sagebrush densities in this area are low and the existing sagebrush provides cover for upland game birds.

36-9 9. The two miles of stream improvement listed on page 13, number 9, conflicts with the one mile listed on page 14, number 6.

10. Page 14 -- Brush control projects planned east of Market Lake WMA (T5N and T6N, R37E) are big game winter use areas. There is little herbaceous vegetation under the sagebrush due to historical overgrazing. The sagebrush provides some low quality forage and cover for big game.

36-10 11. Values for miles of riparian habitat maintenance and improvement on page 17, number 6 and page 18, number 6, do not agree.

12. Page 18 -- Campground development at Kepps Crossing should be done in a way and at a time when it will not result in siltation of Willow Creek.

13. We support the planned off-road vehicle closures on Grays Lake Outlet and Willow Creek (map 5a).

14. Page 18 -- The value of riparian habitat on the South Fork for waterfowl and fish should also be noted.

15. The GYE Bald Eagle Management Plan should also be included in number 5, page 19.

16. Page 38 -- The size of the leave strips and the criteria used to determine when leave strips will be cut should be specified.

17. Page 41, Table 1. -- In some areas there may still be some sage grouse/sharptail grouse on the lek area after April 30. Although breeding will have been completed, hens will be nesting in the vicinity of the lek.

36-11 18. Page 42 -- Why is protective fencing of riparian habitat considered a last resort? There are many instances where protective fencing around riparian areas does not interfer with liveatock management and should, therefore, be considered along with other methods of protecting riparian areas.

19. Page 3-14 -- The gray wolf occurring in the Resource Area are probably individual animals. We have no evidence of pack formation at this time.

20. Page 3-17 -- Waterfowl. Common Merganser also nest along the South Fork.

21. Page 3-18 -- Water and Water Quality. Two streams in Area 4, Teton River and Willow Creek have low water quality resulting from siltation.

Sincerely,

for Tom Reinecker
Regional Supervisor
Region 6

TR:TT:JH:ai
cc: USFWS
Bureau of Program Coordination
Bureau of Wildlife
Bureau of Fisheries

COMMITTEE FOR IDAHO'S HIGH DESERT
EAST IDAHO CHAPTER
392 Moonlite Drive, Idaho Falls 83402

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

December 24, 1984

Dear Sirs:

At the Nov. 8 hearing on the Medicine Lodge RMP/EIS, I mentioned in my testimony that two particularly controversial aspects of Alternative E (Sand Mountain wilderness recommendation, 19% grazing reduction) would likely disqualify it from serious consideration, despite its many other desirable, defendable features. I also noted that Alt. D is essentially Preferred Alternative C with token partial wilderness additions grafted onto it. Thus, Alt. D does not offer a substantive compromise between Alt. C and Alt. E on the broad management issues of interest--especially livestock grazing. Moreover, since the partial wilderness recommended in Alt. D would not reduce the legitimate manageability problems within the Sand Mountain WSA, Alt. D as presented is effectively a waste of space.

37-1

Accordingly, I offered to formulate a significantly different version of Alt. D--the key element of which is to hold grazing at current usage levels--and to submit it to the CIHD Board at our Nov. 17 annual meeting. My recommendation was approved with only minor revisions, thanks in no small measure to the high regard shown by the Idaho Falls District for critical fisheries and game habitat. The generally satisfactory range condition within the Medicine Lodge RA (which sadly is not the situation in much of Idaho) also helped appreciably.

Details of CIHD's suggested compromise alternative are listed below in the same format as Table 2-1, the Summary of Alternatives. We strongly urge that it be formally analyzed in the final RMP/EIS. Because it does not rely on extensive vegetative manipulation (particularly by mechanical means) to prop up wildlife forage against future impacts from grazing increases (21% in Alt. C), CIHD's alternative possesses a significant advantage in overall cost effectiveness. Federal budget reductions are clearly necessary, so extra outlays for beef and mutton production on BLM lands cannot be fiscally justified--particularly when agricultural markets are desperately depressed over the entire nation. Furthermore, by stabilizing revenue from both ranching and sportsmen sources, we feel our alternative would guarantee optimal long-term benefits to the regional economy. Equivalently, were Alt. C to be adopted, wildlife and fishery protection funds would probably be cut first upon budget trimming and impacts of the proposed grazing increases would not then be mitigated--to the long-term detriment of the regional outdoor enterprises.

CIHD is also concerned that expensive, artificial programs of chaining, plowing, and seeding will destroy native plant communities. Once the natural ecologies are extensively disrupted, such programs must be maintained or non-native noxious weeds will dominate.

CIHD SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVE D FOR MEDICINE LODGE RA

Multiple Use and Transfer Areas/Land and Realty Transactions

Matches Alt. C. CIHD recognizes that substantial state and private land exchanges must occur to protect key wildlife habitat, particularly within the Sands Habitat Management Area and along the South Fork of the Snake River.

Minerals Management Close to Alt. E. CIHD considers Alt. C to be overly disposed toward mineral extraction. Closing 160,000 acres to leasing is not unreasonable in light of the ecological and recreational valuea thereon. We are including 3500 acres for the North Junipers in this classification, since we are recommending the North Junipers for a special wilderness designation.

Forest Management Matches Alt. E, though differences from Alt. C appear minor with the exception of 800 acres of T&E habitat.

37-2 Livestock Grazing Management Stable stocking level of 88,302 AUMs. Range improvements to mitigate exiating damage zones, especially in overgrazed riparian areas, with coats approximately equal to Alt. E.

Wildlife Management Matches Alt. E, though the difference from Alt. C is merely 6000 elk AUMs. CIHD commends the attention given to threatened and endangered speciea throughout the RMP. However, we are concerned that the poor range condition in Management Area 1 and the related impacts on big game species will adversely affect the small resident wolf population.

Riparian and Fisheries Management Matches Alt. E. CIHD considera fencing to be the only sound solution to overgrazed riparian bottoma and damaged stream banks, provided elk and antelope migrationa are not strongly impacted.

Recreation Management Matches Alt. C, with the exception that 4200 acres (North Junipers, Snake River Islands) are classified primitive.

37-3 Special Designations Matches Alt. E, since CIHD supports Research Natural Areas wherever practical. We note that the difference from Alt. C is only 2000 RNA acres, so we complement your treatment of this category. CIHD strongly supports the BLM recommendation for Congressional study of the South Fork as a scenic and recreational river.

37-4 Wilderness CIHD recommends that all 39 of the Snake River Ialands (700 acres) and the North Junipers (3500 acres) be designated wilderness. The Wilderness Act recognizes islands as a special case and all islands have shifting boundaries and acreages, so we do not fael the BLM objections are valid. The key advantage of wilderneas for the Snake River Islands would be permanent withdrawal from mineral entry, which is obviously necessary for this precious cottonwood riparian habitat.

Similarly, the extremely fragile soils and truly unique ecology of the North Junipers must be spared mineral exploration and extraction activities. The small size of tha North Junipers poses a

distinct problem in this regard. However, special wilderness recommendations for such deserving areas were permitted under the broad heading of withdrawals in Section 201 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, prior to the term of Interior Secretary Watt. CIHD hopes that the North Junipers ecology will outlive Watt's anti-wildernsss directives. In addition, we note that the North Junipers offsrs ths only opportunity for primitive recreation within the Sands complex. As an interim measure, no-surface-occupancy stipulations should be imposed on the North Junipers to discourage active mineral exploration and new lease applications.

37-5

Fire Managemsnt Matches Alt. C. CIHD generally supports prescribed burning as an inexpensive method for controlling brush. Full fire suppression throughout the Medicine Lodge RA might well disturb wildlife more than the small fires themselves.

In closing, CIHD requests that substantive cost/benefit studies be performed by alternative for relative comparison, with estimated budget allocations for all of the above categories as well as administration.

37-6

Thank you for your attention.

Scott Ploger

Scott Ploger, President
East Idaho Chapter, CIHD

cc: Randall Morris
Kathy Sticklen
Gerald Jayne

38

Route 2 Box 234
Rexburg, Idaho
83440

26 December 1984

Dear Sir:

I am opposed to any wilderness designation and complete closure of the Sands area west of St. Anthony. The present use of the sands by dune buggys and family outings leave no mark on the ever shifting sand.

I favor maintaining the elk herd at the current level, which I believe to be 2000 head.

I generally favor the alternative C approach.

Sincerely,
Randy Brown

39

P. O. Box 191
Dubois, Idaho 83423
December 27, 1984

O'Dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Idaho Falls District
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Subject: Draft Resource Management Plan Impact Statement
Idaho Falls District Draft 1984

Following are additional comments to my letter of November 8, 1984:

We Sullivans have been in this area over 100 years and have had the privilege of seeing the wildlife come and go. Back in the 1880's we had an abundance of wildlife, except mountain sheep. They apparently disappeared because of disease or a hard winter. I remember my father telling me time after time about finding skeletons by the wagon box load in different canyons in the higher mountains, not many mountain sheep skeletons to speak of in the lower elevations. He told me that in the later 1880's the antelope came from the north by the thousands and traveled south for days in the fall. Winter set in, the snow was up on the sides of his saddle horse, a very severe long winter. The Sullivans lived up on the upper place at that time, near the Warm Creek Ranger Station or near the head of Warm Springs Creek. The next spring there were no antelope. After a few years they started to appear; it was assumed most of them died. This same winter wiped out several cattle operations. The only cattle found alive were near the steep canyons on the Snake River, which were few in numbers .

As a young man my father had to pretty much live off the land, and used to spend as much as several weeks to obtain enough wild meat like deer to make it through the winter. It wasn't hunting pressure it was the severity of the winter at different times which apparently kept the game numbers down .

From my father's description there was all kinds of vegetation in the early 1900's or around 1910. From the 1880's up to 1910 the sage grouse were so abundant they blackened the sun on the flats between Warm Springs Creek and the Reno Point, or you could see all kinds of sage grouse in any direction, apparently. These birds were in great numbers until the1930's, when I was a young man. They got a disease which I believe was tularemia, as in the jack rabbits. Anyway they had sort of boils between their wings, which would stop them from flying. This apparently happened more in young sage grouse than it did in the young birds. They died in the hay fields by the hundreds. We would have four or five dead chickens in each buckrake load when haying. This disease lasted until there were hardly any birds left, where formerly there were thousands. The disease was so bad the natives never thought about killing any of the birds to eat.

Back from 1912 to 1920 a good number of homesteads and large stock operations were taken up, which eliminated a lot of habitat, but the sage grouse hung on in big numbers, which still leads me to believe that disease is the downfall of sage grouse.

In 1931 and 1932 we lost a lot of antelope and deer. The snow was around four feet deep or up to the third wire on a four barbwire fence. The same winter hundreds of head of range horses were lost.

After 1932 we had a lot of winters which were not too severe and the predators were pretty well eliminated and game gained in number by the hundreds. This period ended back in the early 1950's when we had snow between three or four feet deep and no wind. The next spring where there was juniper or mahogany you would count three or four dead deer.

During different dry periods we were overrun with blacktail rabbits and grasshoppers. I can't remember the years, but insects and rabbits ate the crowns out of the grass, killing the plants. The rabbits were most numerous in the Lidy Hot Springs area and on south. The grasshoppers were most numerous in the higher country.

Back in August 1929 this country had six to 12 inches of hail fall in three to four hours from Crooked Creek, Warm Springs Creek and the head of Deep Creek, which washed big trenches in every canyon, taking out all the east and west fences.

Drought, livestock grazing, crickets, grasshoppers, rabbits, cloudbursts and fire have all had an influence on our range conditions.

Sincerely,

SULLIVAN LIVESTOCK

By Franklin W. Sullivan
Franklin W. Sullivan

40

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Pinedale Resource Area
P.O. Box 768
Pinedale, Wyoming 82941

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1601(460)

DEC 27 1984

District Manager
Idaho Falls District
Bureau of Land Management
Attn: RMP/EIS Team Leader
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Gentlemen:

We have reviewed your Draft Medicine Lodge RMP/EIS and would like to say that we feel it is a well presented document. In regards to the Section 15 Wyoming lands being managed by your office, we have the following comments:

1. We agree that it is appropriate for your office to include those lands in your RMP.

2. The possible disposal or transfer of management of these lands identified in the preferred and "B" alternative is an appropriate consideration. We have no conflict with this but do suggest that mineral ownership be retained.

3. As per the attached memorandum of understanding between the State Director of Idaho and Wyoming, the Wyoming State Office will need to be contacted prior to finalizing any disposal action.

We continue to feel that these lands are best managed by your office and are confident that you are doing a good job.

Sincerely,

Area Manager

Enclosure

41

December 20, 1984

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho
83401

RE: Comment on the Medicine Lodge Draft Resource Management Plan

Dear BLM:

I greatly appreciate this opportunity for public comment on your recently released Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. The RMP will guide management direction for the next two decades on the 790,000 acres within its boundaries (including the INEL).

I strongly support the Committee for Idaho's High Desert Alternative, and am supportive of many aspects of Alternative E (the "amenities/wildlife" Alternative). Of primary significance in Alt. E is its decrease in actual grazing by 19% combined with no reduction in wildlife habitat and full wilderness designation for Sand Mountain and the Snake River islands.

The BLM is to be commended for its proposal to designate the St. Anthony Sand Dunes and riparian area along the South Fork of the Snake River as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. I have visited the South Fork reach and was very impressed with this high quality habitat. From the description in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's "Important Fish and Wildlife Habitats in Idaho" (1980, the unique ecosystems program document), both of these sites are well deserving of ACEC status, and I am very pleased that the BLM plans to protect these sensitive sites through special management.

I have a number of concerns with the BLM's preferred Alternative (C). I strongly disagree with increasing livestock AUMS, which this Alt. proposes to raise by around 21%. This is a continuation of the old subsidized special interest racket that is now in the twilight of its time. We are living out the anachronism in the livestock industry on public lands in Idaho, and twenty years from now cattle will likely have disappeared, just as sheep, by and large, are doing today. The truth is that these ventures just can't economically compete with the other 97% of the industry which doesn't use public forage or subsidy, and I think that the RMPs should start providing the public with Alternatives that realistically face what is happening. The BLM should begin by designating AUMs to wildlife bringing it up to carrying capacity on current forage, and only then consider allocating some of the remainder to livestock. By the same token, it is ridiculous to propose $1.4 million in "range improvements" for an industry which may not be with us much longer. This is just another aspect of the public subsidy or welfare system which no longer has a place in enlightened stewardship of the public lands. Rather than returning the relatively small payback (at $1.37 per AUM) the public gets from livestock interests, I'd like to see it put into wilderness management, for example, or some other non-consumptive management pot. It was unclear to me whether the 1% of the land inhabited by native plant communities is being grazed or not, but if so, I urge its complete protection from non-wildlife grazing.

The proposed 14 miles of fencing are excellent, as this is the only way to enhance recovery and give adequate protection to these riparian sites. Corrective action should, however, be taken to mitigate the situation for overgrazed riparian bottoms essential to moose populations.

The BLM's recommendation for Congressional study for Wild and Scenic River qualification of the 61 miles of the South Fork of the Snake River from Palisades Reservoir downstream to the Henry's Fork confluence is excellent. This would significantly enhance protection of bald eagle habitat in an area which provides the greatest opportunity in the three-state region for recovery due to stable early season nesting temperatures.

I urge the BLM to reconsider its finding of non-suitability for the Snake River Islands WSA and the Sand Mountains WSA. A non-suitable recommendation for these sites greatly reduces opportunity for primitive recreation in the RA, and would mean that the NWPS would not benefit from a representation of the rare cottonwood formation in the former WSA. Management problems are not insurmountable for these sites, and the public interest would be much better served by making a positive wilderness recommendation.

As I mentioned at the outset, I support the Committee for Idaho's High Desert Alternative, and am generally supportive of Alternative E, although it doesn't go far enough in permanently designating wildlife AUMs or in emphasizing nonconsumptive/non-commodity uses. If the Staff has not had opportunity to read Dr. George Coggins' five paper analysis of the law of public rangeland management, I urge you to do so. The papers are cited below and if you are not able to get copies in Idaho Falls, I'll send you xeroxes upon request. Coggins' interpretation of the legislative and case law surrounding public domain management is an important perspective which should be read and cited in the development of the Final E.I.S., particularly pages IV analyzing the multiple use mandate.

Please include this statement in the RMP record, and please send me a copy of the Final E.I.S. when it is issued. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Bowler
Star Route
Bliss, Idaho 83314

Coggins, G.C., P.B. Evans and M. Lindeberg-Johnson. 1982. The Law of Public Rangeland Management I: The Extent and Distribution of Federal Power. Environmental Law 12: 535-621.

Coggins, G.C. and M. Lindeberg-Johnson. 1982. The Law of Public Rangeland Management II: The Commons and the Taylor Act. Environmental Law 13: 1-101.

Coggins, G.C. 1983. The Law of Public Rangeland Management III: A Survey of Creeping Regulation at the Periohery, 1934-1982. Environmental Law 13: 295-365.

Coggins, G.C. 1983. The Law of Public Rangeland Management IV: FLPMA, PRIA, and the Multiple Use Mandate. Environmental Law 14: 1-132.

Coggins, G.C. 1984. The Law of Public Rangeland Management V: Prescriptions for Reform. Environmental Law 14: 497-546.

42

SIERRA CLUB
MIDDLE SNAKE GROUP
Box 552 Boise, Idaho 83701

21 Dec 84

Manager, Idaho Falls District
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Rd
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Subject: Medicine Lodge Draft RMP

On behalf of the Sierra Club I would like to make the following observations on the Medicine Lodge RMP.

The Snake River, particularly the South Fork, represents an extremely valuable asset for Eastern Idaho. For this reason we applaud your recommendation that that the South Fork be studied for possible Wild and Scenic River Status. We support your proposal for Special Recreation Management/ACEC along the South Fork.

All 39 of the Snake River Islands sould be recommended for Wilderness designation. The ecological and wildlife values of the island ecosystem are well documented. While the presence of an ecosystem type in the National Wilderness Protection System should not bar another area of the same type from Wilderness recommendation the absence of an ecosystem almost demands an aggressive effort to identify and designate as Wilderness areas of that type. We do not believe the Wilderness Preservation System currently includes the ecosystem type found in the Snake River Islands. It should.

42-1

We applaud your recognition of the natural and ecological value of the North Junipers. We feel, however, that an ORV closure is not adequate protection for this unique and valuable area. We ask that the area be recomended for Wilderness designation under the provisions of Sec 201 of FLPMA.

42-2

We support your proposal for a Semi-Primitive Non Motorized classification for a segment of Management Area 1. We question whether this alone will protect the resources of the area or will adequately provide for the wildlife population. Since prey for the Endangered Gray Wolf depend on the area we feel that the currently unacceptable range condition must be improved. Both forage and riparian zones must be managed for wildlife until their condition has improved to the point where the grazing of domestic livestock does not occur at the expense of wildlife.

96

We support your proposal for Special Recreation Management-/ACEC for the St. Anthony Dunes. We applaud the efforts you have taken in the past to protect the elk wintering areas

threatened by plowing the Egin-Hammer Road and we support the road closures included in the Sands Habitat Management Plan.

The resource area consists of almost 800,000 acres. The Natural and Wildlife values of most of this land have been seriously or even hopelessly compromised by previous management and use. In the light of the history of use and abuse by man the only real multiple use alternative is the alternative that best mitigates existing damage and seeks to restore the balance between man and nature. For this reason your Wildlife/Amenities alternative (E) is the Multiple Use Alternative and the alternative we urge you to adopt.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this RMP.

Charles C. Yoder
BLM Issues Coordinator

Commodity increases are not necessarily in the public interest. This is particularly true since wild game production on public lands is actually a much more valuable public commodity than livestock production. There is great demand for the former while there is very little to no demand for the latter. We are certain that a sound and objective cost-benefit analysis would prove this.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this EIS.

Sincerely,

Tom Robinson, Director
Northern Rockies Region

43

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1935

December 27, 1984

Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Attn: RMP/EIS Team Leader Re: Medicine Lodge RMP/EIS

The Wilderness Society strongly recommends the adoption of Alternative E as described in the Draft Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan EIS. We believe that this alternative best protects the diverse and productive wildlife habitat that this area is known for. In addition, it recommends wilderness classification for 2 very deserving areas one of which is totally unrepresented in the National Wilderness Preservation System. We believe that all of the Snake River Islands should be recommended as wilderness. We also request that the BLM make a special
43-1 request to the Secretary of the Interior that the 3,S00 acre North Juniper area be recommended.

We support the BLM's recommendation for Congressional Study of the South Fork as a Wild and Scenic River. We also support the Special Recreation Management Area and ACEC proposals along the South Fork and over the St. Anthony Rivers.

With respect to livestock use of the area, we believe that the objectives of Alternative E are consistent with what should be the highest and best use for this resource area both environmentally and economically. We believe that range improvements should be used to correct areas in declining condition and not to crowd more livestock on poor condition range. The value of wildlife in Idaho has clearly been shown through new studies conducted by the Idaho Department of Fish & Game in conjunction with BLM. If the Idaho Fish & Game recommends that a 19% reduction in livestock grazing would be best for forage and cover requirements then this recommendation should be implemented. Taxpayer subsidized beef production through expensive range improvements projects and low AUM fees at the expense of economically valued wildlife populations is not the best use of our public lands.

NORTHERN ROCKIES REGIONAL OFFICE
413 WEST IDAHO STREET, SUITE #102, BOISE, IDAHO 83702

(208) 343-8153

44

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION X
1200 SIXTH AVENUE
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98101

REPLY TO ATTN OF: M/S 443

DEC 27 1984

O'dell A. Frandsen
Oistrict Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls Oistrict Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Oear Mr. Frandsen:

We have reviewed the Oraft Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan. The OEIS analyzes five alternative plans for managing 861,187 acres of land in southeast Idaho.

The OEIS indicates that there will be a minor increase in water quality due to implementation of the preferred alternative. The Final EIS should explain whether water quality standards are currently being met and how water quality standards compliance will be affected by each alternative. Also, according to Appendix G, monitoring and evaluation of sedimentation will be accomplished with an ocular technique. Other more precise techniques for measuring sediment may be needed to measure the effects of best management practices.

Based on our review, we have rated this OEIS LO (Lack of Objections) in accordance with our responsibility under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act to determine whether the environmental impacts of proposed Federal actions are acceptable in terms of public health, welfare and environmental quality.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this report. Should you wish to discuss our comments, please contact Oaniel I. Steinborn, Chief of the EIS and Energy Review Section, at (206) 442-1755.

Sincerely,

Robert S. Burd
Oirector, Water Oivision

cc: IOO
F&WS, Boise Field Office

45

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208

In reply refer to: SJ

December 31, 1984

RMP/EIS Team Leader
Idaho Falls District Office
USDI Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Sir or Madam:

We have reviewed the Medicine Lodge Reaource Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Our comments are liated below.

45-1 1. The diacussion on page 26 of consiatency with plans, programs, and policies of Federal, State, and local governments or agencies should point out that BLM is participating as a cooperating agency with BPA in preparing a draft EIS covering electric power line reinforcement within the Medicine Lodge Reaource Management Plan area. The EIS will addreas the potential impacts of alternate 161-kV line locations between Goshen and Drummond Subatations. Extensive coordination between BLM and BPA is occurring to minimize the impacts on the Medicine Lodge Resource Management area and adjoining county lands.

45-2 2. The EIS, in accordance with Section 503 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), should address the location of existing corridors within the study area. It would be extremely helpful if a map of existing corridors could be included. Also, a definition of "corridor" should be included in the glossary.

3. There is potential for future growth in the area covered by the resource management plan. It is highly probable that this growth will require future electric transmission support. To provide for this growth and to minimize future conflicts with utility requirements, the plan should identify possible energy corridors. Limitation of corridor options has as great an impact on private lands as on public lands.

4. Instead of the corridor or right-of-way restrictions indicated in the EIS, we recommend that you adopt a corridor planning approach which includes both corridor windows and corridor avoidance areas. Specific unique or highly sensitive resources (such as the areas of critical environmental concern or wilderness study areas within each management area) could be designated as corridor avoidance areas. Corridor windows could be designated where there may be a likelihood of future corridor need. We have enclosed a copy of the corridor planning approach used by the Forest Service. We feel it is a flexible and workable approach to corridor planning and highly recommend its use for all public lands.

5. We notice that certain utilities with facilities in the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan area were not listed as receiving a copy of the draft EIS for comment. They may have proposals or facilities that would be affected by the plan and they should have an opportunity to comment. They are:

Utah Power and Light (UP&L)
Fall River Rural Electrical Coop (FRREC)
Pacific Power and Light Co. (PP&L)
Lower Valley Power and Light (LVP&L)
City of Idaho Falls
Montana Power Co.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft EIS. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

for Nicholas J. Stos
Anthony R. Morrell
Environmental Manager
Bonneville Power Administration

Enclosure

46

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
610 NORTH JULIA DAVIS DRIVE BOISE, 83702

January 7, 1985

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Idaho Falls District BLM
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

We have reviewed the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan and draft EIS and have the following comments to make concerning cultural resources:

1. After discussing the situation with Mr. Richard Hill, District Archaeologist, we agree the first cultural resource activity plan should be written for the Sands Management Area. The potential for finding old prehistoric sites is high in this area. Also, a great deal of vandalism has occurred.

2. We recommend using the Lower Salmon River Cultural Resource Plan as a guide in preparing the Sands CRM plan.

3. We believe the archaeological and historic properties along the South Fork of the Snake River and Henry's Fork are potentially quite significant. Very little inventory and evaluation has occurred in these areas. Because of the large amounts of U.S. Forest Land and private land, it would be appropriate for the Idaho Historical Society, the BLM and the USFS to jointly sponsor work in the area.

4. In general, we feel the archaeological properties in the Idaho Falls area are very important because they reflect the interaction of peoples from the Plateau, the High Plains, and the Great Basin. These sites will produce information important for our understanding of the origins and life-styles of the peoples in western North America.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Green

TJG/rm

THOMAS J. GREEN
State Archaeologist
State Historic Preservation Office

47

PRODUCING DEPARTMENT
DENVER DIVISION

TEXACO

TEXACO
U.S.A.
A DIVISION OF TEXACO INC.
P. O. BOX 2100
DENVER, COLORADO 80201

December 31, 1984

BLM Planning Process
State of Idaho
Idaho Falls District
Medicine Lodge RMP

Mr. O'Dell A. Frandsen, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

Our copy of the Draft RMP and EIS arrived too late to meet your December 27th deadline for comments; nevertheless, with the hope that some extension has been made we appreciate this opportunity.

47-1 In the discussion of alternatives and the deacription of the Management Areas, the figures used to delineate available acres for leasing with various levels of restrictions or stipulations do not seem to tally. It appears that the BLM has included acreage in these figures where only the mineral estate is federally owned. Therefore, the BLM should recompute the numbers in order to more accurately define the amount of land available to leasing and under what constraints. The fact that the numbers do not add up brings us to believe that the true picture of lands available for energy and mineral exploration and development activities is not being presented. For example, the Resources Area contains 789,135 acres of public land, yet stipulations and closures are being applied to nearly one million acres.

47-2 The plan refers to areas closed to leasing; however, it is not specified whether these areas are formally withdrawn or are closed as a result of the Manager's decision. While the areas that are closed do not appear to cause a major conflict with land availability for exploration opportunities, we believe that this distinction should be made. If the areas are not formally withdrawn, then the BLM is not complying with the IBLA Robert G. Lynn Decision (76 IBLA 383), which specifies that if a decision is to be made to reject a lease offer, the record must clearly

support that leasing, even with an NSO stipulation, is not in the public interest. The justification must be substantive and site-specific. If leasing in the area is determined not to be in the public interest, even with NSO, consideration should be given to formally withdrawing the lands involved. Only those areas that are withdrawn should be closed to oil and gas leasing.

47-3 No specifics have been presented as to energy and minerals as a possible priority. The Medicine Lodge Resource Area falls within the Overthrust Belt, an area known to have extremely important potential for oil and gas reserves. Yet, no consideration has been given to the fact that in some management areas, the geologic potential for mineralization is high enough to warrant top consideration for management. The plan states that th BLM will manage mineral resources; however, it appears that the plan only manages how to protect the surface from disturbances. There is no evidence that the BLM has prepared a tradeoff analysis as to the opportunities for energy and mineral activities that are lost as a result of the implementation of any of the alternatives.

Your consideration of these comments will be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

RICHARD W. STANTON
Land Manager (Contracts & Records)

By G. M. Barrow

GMB:JE

48-2 We submit that the Bureau's regulatory jurisdiction does not extend to privately held surface in the manner suggested by the Draft Plan. Certainly, the Bureau cannot under any circumstances, apply regulatory restrictions and stipulations to only one class of surface user as the Draft Plan implies it will to the minerals and oil and gas industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and your consideration of our views. We look forward to future opportunities to participate in the Bureau's planning process. Please contact Mr. Fernando Blackgoat, 303/789-7488 if you desire more information.

Sincerely,

H. W. Praetorius

FB:mma

c - Mr. Clair M. Whitlock, Idaho State BLM Director

EXXON COMPANY, U.S.A.
POST OFFICE BOX 120 • DENVER, COLORADO 80201

EXPLORATION DEPARTMENT
WESTERN DIVISION
H.W. PRAETORIUS
MANAGER

January 2, 1985

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

Exxon Company, U.S.A. welcomes this opportunity to comment on the Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (DRMP/EIS) for the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. Exxon has a keen interest in the formulation and implementation of management policy for federal public lands because of the significant potential these lands have for discovery and development of energy resources.

We were pleased to find in our review of the DRMP/EIS that the Bureau's planners had considered energy and minerals as a multiple use resource. We agree with your assessment of high potential for oil and gas occurrence throughout the Medicine Lodge Resource Area. Exxon also concurs with your finding of non-suitability for the Snake River Islands and Sand Mountain WSAs. We believe that sufficient protection can be provided for these WSAs through the Bureau's management of them as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

48-1 Exxon does have one serious concern about the draft plan. It involves the apparent extension of the BLM's planning and regulatory authority to lands not under its jurisdiction. We refer to page 2-12, "Other Resource Uses in Alternative C;" page 2-23, Table 2-1 "Summary of Alternatives;" and page 4-19, "Environmental Consequences of Alternatives, Minerals." Language on these referenced pages implies that standard, special, and no surface occupancy stipulations will be imposed on oil and gas exploration and development activities that may occur on split estate lands--that is, on lands where the underlying minerals may be federally owned but where the surface is privately owned. Page 2-23, Table 2-1 "Minerals Management" indicates that the BLM intends to apply leasing stipulations to 930,030 acres. Page 3-2, "Affected Environment-Lands," on the other hand, states that the BLM administers 648,719 acres.

48-2 Further inspection of Table 2-1 indicates that only the oil and gas industry is subject to the above stipulations. We can find no reference in the Draft Plan where the application of similar stipulations to "surface only" users would be required. This questionable application of the Bureau's authority seriously discriminates against the minerals and oil and gas industries.

A DIVISION OF EXXON CORPORATION

COMMENT SHEET DRAFT MEDICINE LODGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name David J. Thompson

Address RT. 3 Box 437-3B Rexburg, Idn. 83440

This draft to me seems to be a very common sense approch to the management of this area. I agree with your Alternative C. I particularly like the proposal for area 5-6 with respect to the sands area. I do not think that are should be wilderness. This plan seems to have a good balance between production and protection.

Thank
D. Thompson

Please continue on back.

JOHN R. SWANSON
P. O. Box 922
Berkeley, CA 94701

December 21, 1984.

Bureau of Land Management.
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401.

Dear Sirs;

Please accept my Comments, as Follows, concerning ===

Medicine Lodge Resource Area Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental - Impact Statement.

I have been acquainted with this portion of Idaho for many decades; and continue to the firm opinion that this area contains Outstanding Wilderness, scenic, wildlife, fish, botanic and cultural resources of certain National significance.

An area that provides a Vital and, as all Americans' hope, a Lasting refuge for Man, and for all life, on this endangered planet.

An area, then, that fully benefits Man, and fully benefits all life, on this damaged Earth.

I firmly believe that the purpose of our Federal Public Lands agencies is to Preserve the Wilderness, wildlife, fish, botanic & all Biological Resources & cultural and Scenic Resources located on such Federal Public Lands.

and/or Each Unit of our Federal Public Lands to be dedicated as a permanent Preserve. With Each Preserve to protect ecosystems, preserve watersheds, save and enhance wildlife-fish and their respective habitats, protect and promote all Biological Resources and their diversity, restore & recover all Mis-damaged areas to their natural environmental condition, and to preserve, protect, strengthen and expand Wilderness.

As the foundation of all Land and Water Resources is Wilderness.

And the purpose of all Land and Water Resources planning-management is to preserve, protect, strengthen and expand Wilderness.

I fully hope that the following areas - Areas of Bureau of Land Management properties located on this Medicine Lodge Resource Area be classified as Wilderness, and to be included in our National Wilderness Preservation System - at this time - as Each such unit features superb wilderness attributes:

- Comas 17,200, - Sand Mountain 28,165, - Longest Valley Islands 370,
- Pine Creek Islands 235, - Table Rock Islands 525, - North Junipero 6,850,
- Hemphill Isle 355.
- Plus, additional acreage of about 98,000 (acres).
- So as to total high as to of some 151,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management Properties, located on this Medicine Lodge Resource area, to be included as Wilderness in our National Wilderness Preservation System — at present time —.
- Select as the permanent planning-management alternative for this Resource Area; alternative = Preservation - Wilderness - Wildlife - Biological - Scenic Resources.

So permanently Ban all forms of surface and sub-surface development on all current, proposed and potential Wilderness, including; Wilderness Study Areas.

With No. Release of any Road less Areas.

So acquire all Inholdings on all Public Lands. With No Disposal of any Public Lands.

For when we Save our Natural Lands and Waters, including Wilderness;
we Save Idaho, America, and the World!

Sincerely,
D. R. Swanson.

LETTER RESPONSES

1-1 Alternative C, the proposed plan, sets forth initial stocking rates (AUMs) for livestock that allows adequate forage for existing wildlife numbers. With the proposed rangeland improvements, plus grazing systems tailored to enhance or maintain resource conditions, the projected long term stocking rates will provide adequate forage for the expected increase in wildlife numbers. BLM believes these prescriptions provide a fair balance between livestock and wildlife, which will maintain and enhance public rangeland values into the future.

4-1 The Hittson grazing allotment was rated as 100 percent good ecological condition range and subsequently through our selective management categorization process (see pages B-2 and B-3 of Medicine Lodge Draft RMP) was rated a maintain allotment. Therefore, our objective is to maintain the present management on the allotment because it is achieving our management goals.

The Hittson Allotment contains 90 acres of public land and is currently rated at 181 AUMs or .5 acres per AUM. The other leases in the Henry's Lake area are rated on the average at about 3 acres per AUM. A rating of .5 acres per AUM is more in line with seeded irrigated pasture land and not native grassland in the Henry's Flat area.

The present livestock use of the public land in the allotment is in conjunction with 560 acres of private land and is acceptable as proper use under the present situation. But, if the 90 acres were ever fenced separate from the private lands and used at .5 acres per AUM, present good resource conditions and forage production would eventually decline. Therefore, the 90 acres of public land was rated at 3 acres per AUM. This rating is in line with other grazing allotments in the area, and should allow for forage production on a sustained yield basis while maintaining present resource conditions into the future.

5-1 BLMs planning process is designed to address specific issues identified before the Resource Management Plan is written. During the issue identification step, people were invited to provide issues that BLM would cover in the plan. The identified ORV issue concerns what lands should be designated open, closed or limited to motorized vehicles. This issue has been delt with in the plan. The plan goes a step further and spells out what recreation opportunities are available on the public lands using the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) approach. The ROS analysis has identified over 98 percent of the Resource Area as open to motorized vehicles, which is considered adequate to offer a variety of ORV opportunities.

An error was made in organizing Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences. Alternative C impacts for Recreation and ORV Management were accidentally duplicated for Alternative E. Please see Text Changes, page 119, and note that the impacts on ORV use is significantly less than was stated in the Draft RMP/EIS.

Specific ORV use areas and management prescriptions were not included the plan because of the general scope and intent of an RMP. However, the RMP does state that specific plans will be prepared at a later date that will include ORV use areas. BLM will work with groups and individuals interested in locating areas where concentrated recreational vehicle operation is an appropriate use of the public lands.

5-2 See letter response 5-1.

5-3 BLM's ORV designation categories are open, closed and limited. The limited category covers several situations ranging from open to closed, where certain restrictions are needed to protect other resource values and uses from the adverse impacts of ORV use. A caption of "Seasonal Closure" in the tables would provide a clearer picture of what is meant with the limited category.

5-4 See letter response 5-3.

5-5 An evaluation of the quantity and quality of what recreational information is available to the public is not considered appropriate within the scope of issues addressed in the RMP. As specific recreation area plans are prepared, brochures, maps and other information sources will be considered to provide guides to the public and tools to manage recreation use.

5-6 The sand dunes in Management Areas 3 and 5 will be included in an extensive recreation area management plan for most of the Resource Area. This plan includes lands in the Resource Area not included in the Snake River and St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Areas.

6-1 All perrenial and some intermittent stream segments on public land in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area were inventoried on the ground. All stream segments with any grazing or other impacts were identified. The majority of these stream segments were found to be in good or better condition with respect to water quality, erosion and fisheries. Those in fair condition or poorer were listed in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. Programs will be developed through watershed/ fishery habitat management plans to reverse the trend. The first of these plans will be completed in late 1985.

There are very few public lands on either Camas Creek or its tributaries. Corrective management on these small tracts would be insignificant to the total fishery resource.

6-2 Alternatives range from no action, improvement of 23.9 miles of stream with 4 miles of fencing in Alternative B, improvement of 30.5 miles of stream with 13.6 miles of fencing in Alternatives C and D, and improvement of 32.2 miles of stream with 28.3 miles of fencing under Alternative E. This represents a wide range of improvement options. Nearly all significant areas of impact are slated for improvement under the proposed plan. We did, however, inadvertently omit 2 areas originally planned for improvement through development of stream/fishery management plans. This correction is made in the Final RMP.

7-1 Benefit/cost analyses of proposed improvements will be preformed prior to installation of any improvements in accordance with Bureau policy.

7-2 Cash flow is considered when preparing benefit/cost analysis of improvements. See response 7-1.

7-3 See response 7-1.

7-4 Good question. We should have chosen better wording. We tend to use methods other than fencing where feasible because of the high installation costs and heavy maintenance requirements of fencing. In many cases fencing may have the highest benefits for fencing costs incurred or may be the only workable option. Fencing would definitely be planned in these situations. Analysis for each stream will be done in a watershed/fishery habitat activity plan.

7-5 Grazing allotments that were placed in the "I" category are shown on pages B-32 through B-35 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. Many of the "I" designations were a result of conflicts with moose summer and winter ranges. Management Alternatives C, D, and E have been listed to improve the situation. If one of these alternatives are implemented then there should be an improvement of the moose ranges. These improvements are shown in tables F-3 and I-6 in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP for Alternative C.

7-6 The U.S. Forest Service and BLM grazing fees have been the same since 1930. Both agencies have worked together to determine grazing fees in the past, and will continue to do so in the future.

A portion of the grazing fees collected are returned to the BLM and Grazing Advisory Boards for rangeland improvements. These improvements benefit both livestock and wildlife and have included wells, pipelines, wildlife waters and other projects. Even though some of the money has been used to improve wildlife habitat, laws do not specifically state that it must.

8-1 The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail was discussed on page 3-23 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. The status of designation was incorrectly stated, however. The trail was designated by the U.S. Congress, and a draft comprehensive plan has been prepared.

8-2 The recreational importance of public lands that may be traversed by the trail have been noted and addressed on page 3-24 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. Under Visual Resources we have stated that the public lands along the Continental Divide near Monida Pass will be managed as Class II. This class establishes objectives to retain the existing character of the landscape, which is consistent with the comprehensive plan for the trail.

10-1 Alternative C, the proposed plan, does not propose an increase in AUMs for the Resource Area. Presently the Resource Area has a stocking rate of 103, 281 AUMs. Alternative C proposes a stocking rate of 100,449 AUMs. This is a 3 percent reduction from what is presently allocated for livestock use. Actual use of the Resource Area for the past 5 years has been 88,302 AUMs which is 14.5 percent below the

existing stocking rate. Considering the economic and market conditions of the livestock industry with no improvement forecast in the future, the 14.5 or a similar percent nonuse may continue in the future. Long term AUM projections are based on the increase of forage provided through vegetation manipulation and the improved use of the public land through implementation of grazing systems and other range improvement projects. Long term AUM projections may or may not be fully utilized by the livestock industry. If fully utilized, these proposed stocking rates were determined by the range and wildlife staff to be in line with the capacity of the public lands to meet or exceed livestock and wildlife forage needs. Alternative B proposed significant increases in livestock use. Through the evaluation process by the resource specialists this alternative was not preferred because of the anticipated adverse impacts on wildlife, soils and other resources.

10-2 The financial loss to the ranchers would be an annual loss while the cost of improvements is basically a one-time cost (maintenance costs would be annual, but are small in comparison to total installation costs). Additionally, range improvements are financed largely through returned grazing fees, of which there would be none under no grazing.

15-1 Acreage figures in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS most often represent only public lands, but discussions pertaining to mineral resource management usually consider all federal mineral estate lands, including lands with the surface estate under nonfederal ownership. In the final RMP we have made this clearer. Within the Medicine Lodge Resource Area are about 930,030 acres of federal mineral estate lands (outside National Forest boundaries). About 648,700 of these acres are public lands administered by the BLM.

15-2 The BLM is responsible for the management of federal mineral estates regardless of surface ownership. Federal agencies are required to conduct an analysis of impacts and develop practical mitigating measures before initiating any action that could have adverse environmental consequences. This direction comes form the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Environmental Quality Improvement Act of 1970, the Clear Air Act of 1970 and Executive Order 11514; Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality (all as amended). For these reasons our office has elected to apply surface resource protection stipulations to federal mineral leases on nonfederal lands, especially where exploration and development operations could impact adjacent federal lands. Although the surface owner is well within his rights to alter the surface of his lands (within limits imposed by local, state and federal laws), the BLM as lessor must take responsibility for mitigating environmental impacts that could result from mineral lease operations. However, at the request of land owner and lessee, reasonable changes in surface protection stipulations could be allowed.

17-1 See letter response 15-1.

17-2 See letter response 15-2.

17-3 Lands identified in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP as closed to mineral leasing are formally withdrawn from such mineral entry.

19-1 Control of noxious weeds and forest and rangeland insects are generally addressed at the activity plan level and not in an RMP/EIS.

The Bureau has and will continue to implement programs for the control of weeds and insects according to policy as the need exists and as funding is made available.

19-2 See letter response 19-1.

19-3 The discussion of the East Indian Creek Forest Service Allotment on page B-33 has been revised to better explain the problems and management alternatives. The conclusions reached at the Cottonwood Cattle Association's meeting will be followed as long as objectives for the allotment are being met. If problems continue then further coordination between the BLM, Forest Service and Grazing operators will be needed.

21-1 Public lands that are located along the Henry's Fork of the Snake River are included in the Snake River System Special Recreation Management Area. Specific management of the recreation values along the Henry's Fork will be addressed in a comprehensive plan to be developed at a later date. (See management decision #7 for Area 9 on page 19 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP).

The 49-mile segment of the Henry's Fork, from Henry's Lake downstream to the confluence of the Warm River, was included for study under Section 5 (d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Lands along that portion of the Henry's Fork are managed primarily by the Targhee National Forest. Only a 1/4-mile of BLM-administered land is within the study segment of Henry's Fork, which would be more appropriately studied by the National Forest.

23-1 On page 3-12, the draft RMP/EIS states that "the more popular and heavily used areas have deteriorated because of litter, inadequate sanitation and uncontrolled vehicle use". Visitor abuse is only one factor that has caused these conditions to occur. Other factors include BLM's lack of adequate maintenance funds and because sites have not been developed sufficiently to handle high levels of recreation use.

Since most of the recreation use areas are located near water sources, the chance of adverse impacts to water resources from concentrated recreation use is a major concern. Development of the more heavily used sites has been proposed in the proposed plan. These improvements and facilities will be designed primarily to accomodate visitor use and mitigate adverse impacts to important resource values, such as water resources. Developments will focus on sanitation facilities for human waste and litter, providing designated sites for camping, and roads and parking for vehicle access. Routine monitoring and maintenance of sealed vaults is scheduled.

24-1 See letter responses 32-1 and 32-2.

24-2 See letter response 32-3.

25-1 Proposed restrictions on oil, natural gas and geothermal exploration operations were developed to provide reasonable protection of sensitive surface resources without significantly jeopardizing the availability of nationally important domestic energy resources. Under the proposed plan, 97 percent of the resource area is open to mineral leasing. Proposed seasonal occupancy would not significantly hamper exploration activities and do not apply to the maintenance and operation of producing wells. Up to 1,900 acres or only two tenths of one percent of the federal oil and gas estate covered by this plan would be beyond the reach of directional drilling operations due to the total restriction of surface occupancy. Only about 1,000 of these non surface occupancy acres will be within the Wyoming-Utah-Idaho portion of the Overthrust Belt.

25-2 Thank you for providing data on mineral resources within the resource area that were not mentioned in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP. Because the document is general in nature, a discussion of every potential mineral occurance was not considered appropriate. Known mineral resources were identified in the RMP, but undiscovered resources were considered only if the lands involved would be made unavailable for exploration and development by any of the plan's alternatives. The metallic mineral values you mentioned involve hypothetical or speculative resources located mostly on National Forest lands open to mineral entry.

26-1 On pages B-32 through B-35 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS the document addresses the grazing allotments that were placed in the "I" category. Many of the "I" designations were a result of conflicts with wildlife, mainly riparian and winter range areas. Management actions have been listed to improve the situation. When they are implemented then there should be the improvement in big game carrying capacities as shown in the Alternative C tables on pages F-3 and I-6 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. The improved habitat should provide for a larger prey base to support the wolves that intermittantly use the area. Current data shows these are solitary wolves and not a pack.

26-2 All improvements will be analyzed prior to installation to determine whether their benefits outweigh the costs. See letter response 7-1.

26-3 The data on the relative contributions of the various activities (irrigated agriculture, forestry, recreation, livestock grazing) was included in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS, Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences-Economics.

26-4 Many of the "public benefits" alluded to are intangible, that is it is difficult or not possible to place a dollar value on them. Those resources that are quantifiable were discussed in Chapter 4. This included land transfers (of all types), forestry, recreation, and livestock grazing. No further quantification is possible . The method the BLM uses to budget their activities does not allow a division of the budget down to the resource area level.

29-1 "Site-specific" as used in the amended court order, means an EIS pertaining to a certain planning area as opposed to a Bureau wide EIS on grazing. The Medicine Lodge RMP/EIS analyzes the various intensities of grazing on a planning area (resource area) as required by the amended court order. In addition, grazing stocking levels, livestock grazing restraints, monitoring, range improvements and resource conflicts were all addressed on a allotment by allotment basis. (Supportive data is filed at the Idaho Falls District Office). Summarization of the results of this analysis is included in the Environmental Consequences section of the EIS. Allotment specific data is included the livestock grazing appendix including identified problems/conflicts, objectives and management alternatives on those allotments where conflicts or problems were identified. This level of detail, down to the grazing allotment, fulfills the requirement stated in the amended court order and complies with the NEPA.

29-2 Baseline data as it pertains to the public lands is a soil survey and vegetative inventory to determine ecological range condition. Essentially all the public lands within the Resource Area had a soils and ecological range condition inventory (see soils and livestock grazing appendix for inventory results). The existing ecological condition of the public lands is a result of the existing and past management practices of the BLM as modified by climate, wildfires and other factors beyond our control. Alternative A, which depicts the existing grazing for the past 5 years, is the best criteria we can compare the other alternatives. The existing situation is the only alternative that shows the impact of grazing to other resource values as it exists today. To compare all alternatives to a no grazing alternative would be an academic exercise because we have no data that depicts the various resource values in a no grazing situation.

29-3 The baseline data is on file at the Idaho Falls District Office. The results of the soils and ecological condition inventory are in the soils appendix (pages C-2, 3 and 4) and livestock grazing appendix (B-14 through 31, Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS). Management areas and land use classifications were not established by ecological condition

results. Ecological condition varied among the 269 Allotments within the Resource Area and was not appropriate for management area deliniation or for land use classification. Soils, wildlife values, recreation, Wilderness Study Areas, livestock, timber, minerals and other resource values were used to deliniate management areas and land use classifications. Allotment categorization, proposed initial and projected stocking levels ("allocation of forage") are all adequately covered in the livestock grazing appendix on pages B-2 and 3 and B-11 and 13 respectively. The potential of soils and the existing and projected ecological condition within each grazing allotment were major criteria used in allotment categorization and establishing proposed stocking levels.

29-4 There is no definitive "fact" that clearly demonstrates when disposals will serve the national interest. Criteria have been established which will be applied to site-specific determinations before any lands are transfered out of federal ownership. These criteria are consistent and further elaborates the disposal criteria in Section 203 (a), (1), (2) and (3) of FLPMA. An economic analysis of agricultural development on public lands has not been done for this Resource Area. Before an agricultural entry is allowed, a site specific economic analysis is made. This analysis is made only after a determination that the proposed entry does not significantly conflict with other resource values and that it meets the requirements of the specific laws still in effect (Desert Land Act and Carey Act). The public lands that would be considered for agricultural entry in the proposed plan, makes up only .4 of 1 percent of the Resources Area. All land transfer proposals will be available to the public for comment.

29-5 Allotment categorization (see page B-2 and 3, Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS) was decided by the Area Manager after reviewing information and input from the area range conservationists, wildlife biologist and other resource specialists. Range condition (ecological) and trend, soil site potential, resource conflicts and ultimately whether management goals are being met were the major criteria used to categorize allotments. The vegetative inventory supplied the data for ecological conditions and trend and the soil survey supplied the data to determine site potential. Resource conflicts were identified through resource specialists input to the Area Manager based on data from wildlife, recreation, soils and archaeological inventories plus information supplied by Idaho Fish and Game and other sources. Management goals specifically addressed whether the allotment was being grazed properly to maintain or improve the ecological condition, trend, and forage production with minimal impact to other resources. The livestock operators were consulted after the determination of the allotment category was made. Out of 269 allotments, only two allotments were reclassified (to "I" allotments) following consultation. Other public involvement in allotment categorization is through the 90 day comment period for the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS.

29-6 The "moderate use class" described in the Idaho RMP Guidebook, page I-13, clearly meets the intent of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. This moderate use class includes public lands which should be retained in federal ownership and managed for a variety of uses. (See response to hearing comment #11).

29-7 The 5 tons per acre accelerated erosion level is a figure that the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) has used as a standard for several years as an accepted level on agricultural cultivated land. Since the BLM has adopted no standard erosion level, the Idaho Falls District decided to use the SCS standard.

Normally, accelerated water erosion on range lands caused by livestock grazing is much lower than 5 tons per acre on slopes greater than 30 percent under heavy grazing pressure. Grazing has been reduced on uplands with slopes greater than 25 to 20 percent. Generally, heavy grazing in hilly country occurs in drainageways or bottomland first. Livestock tend to move or owners tend to more their livestock to new grazing pasture locations as bottomland grass cover diminishes. This also reduces grazing pressure on upland slopes greater than 30 percent. Normally erosion levels tend to remain below the 5 tons per acre level set by the SCS standard. This is the reason for the statement on page 3-19 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS that states "For the Medicine Lodge Resource Area as a whole, the present erosion situation is within normal and acceptable levels".

29-8 Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDF&G) has been involved in the RMP process since June 25, 1981. Their 5 year management plans were reviewed and forage needed to support wildlife demands were supplied. The only demand that was not met was for elk in Management Area 5. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was informed of the planning process at approximately the same time IDF&G was. They were given a preliminary draft of the document to review for impacts on endangered species as required under the Endangered Species Act. They approved and support our management actions to protect threatened and endangered species.

29-9 Supportive data may be found in the appendix section under the appropriate resource activity of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS and at the Idaho Falls District Office. It was agreed that summarizing of the results of inventories, surveys, and other specific data in the RMP/EIS provided the reader with a less confusing document. Specific data or information concerning the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS may be obtained at the Idaho Falls District Office.

31-1 The two small parcels were not nominated for transfer because they possess significant public values. However, these parcels may still be considered for a land exchange. The final RMP will be amended so that exchange proposals may be considered on parcels not identified for transfer. Criteria for these exchanges will also be identified. Therefore, all exchange proposals may be considered.

31-2 The proposed long term stocking rate for the 50,017 acres in Management Area 3 is based on an allotment by allotment evaluation of the present ecological condition, future wildlife numbers, and soil site potential for forage production. As an area, the projected stocking rate is very near the maximum for maintenance or improvement of ecological condition and trend, and providing of forage for existing and future wildlife numbers. On some allotments located in

areas of more productive soils and less wildlife concerns, adjustments could be made in excess of the proposed stocking rates. However, these adjustments would only be implemented after sufficient supportive monitoring data is collected.

31-3 The proposed designation of Management Area 3 as a full suppression area was to avoid the possibility of a wildfire spreading to other than public lands. There are 2,875 acres proposed for vegetative manipulation. If any of these acres are to be done by prescribed fire, a specific plan will be prepared and will not be affected by the full suppression designation.

31-4 The subject of noxious weeds was not addressed in the RMP because it has been a Bureau policy to treat noxious weeds as the need develops and as funding is available.

The Bureau is presently under a moratorium for the use of herbicides on public land. An environmental assessment has recently been completed and is presently out for public review. When a decision is finally reached, the BLM should be able to continue its weed control program before the moratorium was established.

31-5 The intent of mechanical clearing of fence lines, (see page B-5 Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS) is to allow mechanical clearing only to the extent necessary for construction and ease of maintenance. The bladeing of fence lines down to bare soil is not necessary, though in actual practice some soil may be exposed. Mechanical clearing of fence lines will be in compliance as long as bare soil is kept to a minimum.

31-6 Active preference or stocking rates are all subject to future adjustments as dictated by resource monitoring studies (See page B-4 "Future Livestock Adjustments, Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS). Proposed stocking levels are based on a "normal" climatic year. During years of high precipitation, forage production is above normal (during the growing seasons) and extensions in grazing use may be applied for and approved as long as other resources are not adversely affected. Conversely, the opposite may be true during drought years. Range improvements that significantly increase forage production will be distributed to the grazing operators. Increases in grazing preference will result only if supportive monitoring data is available.

31-7 All allotment boundaries described in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS were, to the best of our knowledge, accurate in consideration of the small scale maps used in the document. Any errors in allotment boundaries and stocking rates should be corrected. A meeting between the BLM and the operator(s) should be scheduled as soon as possible to correct these errors.

31-8 An AUM (Animal/Unit/Month) is the amount of forage to feed a 1000 lb cow and her calf for one month. For billing purposes an AUM equals 5 sheep, 1 cow and calf, 1 horse, 1 yearling and 1 bull. Although the feed consumed is different among horses, yearling cattle, cow/calves

and bulls we are unable at this time to change for fractional AUMs (e.g. .75 AUM for a yearling and 1.25 for a horse). Logistics of such changes would require Bureau policy and computer billing program changes.

32-1 An error was made in not carrying the St. Anthony Sand Dunes RNA forward to Alternative C. A correction has been made in the final RMP where Alternative C contains the 1,780 acre RNA. The area includes vegetated lands to meet the objectives of the RNA proposal, and excludes lands of open sand dunes where ORV use is likely.

32-2 The Game Creek RNA was reconsidered and has been adopted for Alternative C. The boundary has been modified to exclude lands where firewood cutting has occurred in the past and vehicle access is possible. The final boundary for the RNA incompasses 375 acres and contains all the forest types represented in the larger proposal.

32-3 The Snake River Island RNAs that are suggested by the Idaho Natural areas Coordinating Committee have been adopted for the proposed plan. They include three islands along the 61-mile reach of the South Fork of the Snake River and total 72 acres. Names for the RNA islands are Squaw Creek (25 acres), Pine Creek (25 acres) and Reid Canal (22 acres).

33-1 We agree with the comment and the text has been changed.

34-1 See letter response to 26-3.

36-1 The acreage listed for transfer under category T-1, page 2-12 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS would be the total acreage that could be transferred out of federal ownership under the proposed plan. Any additional acreage would require an amendment to the plan. However, as described in letter comment 31-1, changes have been made in the plan which will allow more flexibility for land exchanges. This plan does not designate how many acres of public land will be sold or exchanged. Refer to Part 1, page 32-33 for a discussion on land ownership adjustment. Land exchanges will normally be the preferred method of transfer. However, there will be situations that warrant transfer through the land sale process. These decisions will be based on public comment and site-specific application of the landownership adjustment criteria.

36-2 Forest land in all management units that are identified for intensive forest management will be managed under guidelines set forth in the Eastern Idaho Timber Management Environmental Assessment Record. Standard operating proceedures for the protection of wildlife will also be followed. These proceedures are listed on pages 37 and 38 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS.

36-3 The breakdown of forest species to be harvested are found in Appendix F of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. Except in an emergency timber salvage situations due to fire or severe insect and disease damage, only lodgepole pine will be clearcut. Douglas-fir will be managed under a select cut system or a similar cutting method termed shelterwood.

36-4 Harvesting Douglas fir in a mixed timber type will most likely result in the invasion by lodgepole due to its aggressive and hardy nature. However, in a Douglas Fir timber type proper siviculture practices can insure adequate restocking of Douglas Fir. These practices will include mechanical site preparation, the planting of quality seedlings where needed, and providing protection to the site from rodents and livestock.

36-5 Management Area 5 traces the boundary of the Sands Habitat Management Plan (HMP) area. The HMP and its management direction has been incorporated into the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP. The existing document will be reviewed and revised once every 5 years or whenever there is a need shown. During the next revision the number of elk that can be maintained during the winter months may be addressed. If all parties to the agreements concur on a higher number of animals, then that change can be made and implemented as addressed on page 13 management objective 6 and page 14 Management Action 5. Incorporating any changes are relatively easy if supported by the baseline document (Sands HMP).

36-6 There are two levels of fire suppression proposed throughout the plan. These are full and limited suppression. In the full suppression areas, fires are suppressed throughout the year. In limited suppression areas, fires are allowed to burn (while being monitored) during certain times of the year (generally spring and fall) under preplanned weather conditions.

Prescribed fires are a specific project that has a plan prepared before the area is ignited. Since these plans are prepared to treat a specific area, prescribed fires can be used in any area designated for full or limited suppression.

36-7 The brief description of the moderate use class in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS did not specifically mention fish and wildlife resources. However, this moderate use class includes public lands which should be retained in federal ownership and managed for a wide variety of uses. The text has been modified under Multiple-Use and Transfer Classes. We believe fish and wildlife habitat are clearly addressed in the management objectives and require management actions for each management area, and also addressed in the standard operating procedures.

36-8 See letter response 36-2.

36-9 Management Area 5, Management Action #6, should read "Improve 1 mile of Sand Creek through fencing and 1 mile of Sand Creek through livestock management. Maintain existing satisfactory riparian habitat and water quality on 12.8 miles".

36-10 Management Area 8, Management Objective #6, should read, "Maintain good to excellent riparian vegetation on 8.0 miles and improve 1.0 mile of Willow Creek. Maintain good to excellent condition on 7.0 miles of Grays Lake Outlet, 1.6 miles on Tex Creek and 1.8 miles on Hell Creek in support of the 208 project".

Management Area 8, Management Action #6, should read "Two miles of fence would be needed to improve 1.0 mile of stream for riparian and water quality values. An additional 15.0 miles of stream would be managed to improve riparian habitat and water quality while 3.4 miles of stream would be managed to maintain existing riparian, fisheries and water quality in satisfactory condition".

36-11 See letter response 7-4.

37-1 Responses to comments on wilderness will be addressed in the Final Medicine Lodge Wilderness EIS.

37-2 The Interdisciplinary Team considered the suggested modifications for Alternative D. Alternative C as described in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS has been chosen as the proposed plan, with some modifications. Since the decision was made to prepare an abbreviated Final EIS and RMP, a major restructuring of Alternative D is unwarranted. The suggested Alternative D is identical to Alternative E concerning forest management, wildlife management, and riparian habitat management which have already been analyzed in the draft RMP/EIS.

37-3 See letter responses 32-1, 32-2 and 32-3.

37-4 Responses to comments on wilderness will be addressed in the Final Medicine Lodge Wilderness EIS.

37-5 In the proposed plan all semi-primitive non-motorized use (SPNM) areas, such as the North Juniper area, will be open to mineral exploration operations. Applying the no-surface-occupancy stipulation to mineral leases would unreasonably restrict the availability of lands for the development of potential oil and gas resources. SPNM areas will be closed to recreational and indescriminate motorized vehicle use. However, mineral exploration activities are thoroughly controlled by regulations, and as long as the performance of adequate surface protection and rehabilitation measures is ensured, mineral lease operations will be allowed in these areas. Every effort will be made to protect SPNM areas and their characteristics, and other sensitive surface resource values from adverse impacts that could result from mineral exploration.

37-6 See letter response 26-3.

42-1 Responses to comments on wilderness will be addressed in the Final
42-2 Medicine Lodge Wilderness EIS.
43-1

45-1 Consistency as used in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (P.L. 94-579) and BLM Planning Regulations (43 CFR 1600) is a comparison of two or more resource-oriented plans. Although BLM is a cooperating agency, the Goshen-Drummond powerline does not constitute a "plan". Of course, BLM will continue to participate in development of the Goshen-Drummond Draft EIS.

45-2 BLM participated in a statewide corridor study in 1978. At that time, some major utility cooridors were identified, but were not officially designated. In actual practice, the corridor concept has had limited utility. Utility routes are designed to meet demands at least cost, which entails straight line or direct routes, particularly for the larger more expensive projects. Section 503 of FLPMA requires using rights-of-way in common where practical and we will encourage this approach. Definitive regulations for designating utility corridors have not been developed.

This abbreviated Medicine Lodge Final RMP/EIS does not include existing utility locations, but such maps will be used to consider new right-of-way applications.

47-1 See letter response 15-1.

47-2 See letter response 17-3.

47-3 In this planning process, mineral resources are given high priority. In the proposed plan, for example, 97 percent of the area would be open to oil and gas leasing. Although minimizing the impacts of mineral exploration and development on other resource values is a major concern, the BLM is committed, under principles of balanced multiple-use land management, to making public mineral resources available for development.

48-1 See letter response 15-2.

48-2 The Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS recognized the need to ensure protection of sensitive surface resources regardless of the types of surface uses proposed. The minerals industry is but one of many users of public resources for which surface use restrictions are imposed. Livestock grazing, timber harvesting, off-road-vehicle recreation, and other uses also are restricted to minimize environmental damage. Environmental protection considerations are expressed throughout this document and are not limited to mineral exploration and development concerns.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Name	Representing	Testimony Oral	Testimony Written	Response Prepared
Idaho Falls, Idaho Hearing				
Franklin Sullivan	Sullivan Ranch	X	X	
John Holst	Self	X		
Adena Cook	Idaho Trails Council	X		
Carl Atamanczyk	Idaho Falls Trail Machine Assoc.	X		
Jerry Jayne	Idaho Environmental Council	X	X	X
Kevin Streeper	Self	X		
Scott Ploger	East Idaho Chapter of the Committee for Idaho's High Desert	X		
Theo R. Orchard	Marble Shop Inc.	X		
Alan Crail	Snake River Audubon Soc.	X	X	X
St. Anthony, Idaho Hearing				
Dave Rydalch	Self	X		
Gene Williams	Sand Hills Resort	X		
Bill Siddoway	Siddoway Sheep Comp.	X		
James Siddoway	Fremont County Commission	X		

HEARING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Jerry Jayne, Idaho Environmental Council

Comment #1 However, the proposed plan, Alternative C places too much emphasis on increased grazing which would be at the expense of fish and wildlife habitats.

Response: See letter responses 1-1 and 10-1

Comment #2 We also find that the range of alternatives is not completely satisfactory. Alternative B is not really a legitimate alternative.

Response: Each of the five alternatives included in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS are viable in that any one of them could be implemented. The mix of multiple uses varies, and provides a reasonable range of alternatives in our view. Several other alternatives could have been developed to give a total of 7 or 8 or 12 alternatives. We believe this leads to confusion as well as indecision. We attempted to keep the number of alternatives to a manageable and understandable level. The fact that Alternative B is oriented toward commodity production and may not be a desireable multiple use mix, does not, in itself, make it an invalid alternative. Alternative B is possible but, considering other resource values and uses, may not be desireable.

Comment #3 Another deficiency of all the alternatives is there isn't enough emphasis on rehabilitating fisheries in the streams where they have been lost. You need to do more than just protect and improve the water quality. You need to provide habitat and breeding areas for fish, stream bank repairs and rehabilitation by fencing, maybe even constructing some pools.

Response: Several streams were selected for both fencing and habitat improvement. These include Eddie Creek, Irving Creek and the East Fork of Indian Creek, and compose about 14% of all stream reaches in the Resource Area. When land ownership patterns, and fisheries in presently good to excellent condition are considered, this choice of streams covers nearly all areas in the Resource Area with significant reaches of public lands where management efforts by the BLM can effectively increase fish populations through habitat improvement. Fisheries in the streams mentioned above have declined due to overgrazing and high spring runoff levels. Little narrative on improvement techniques was present in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS because those issues will be fully addressed in the watershed/fishery activity planning stage. Improvement techniques will most likely include some combination of channel fencing, stock drift fencing, grazing systems, and habitat improvement structures/options, such as K-dams, rock placement, bank structures, riparian planting or seeding, and so on.

Comment #4 On timber, more information is needed. I tried to find the amount of old growth timber left in the area, and I couldn't. I don't know if Alternative E protects enough of the old growth or not.

Response: Approximately 60 percent or 8,646 acres of the commercial forest land in the Idaho Falls District can be considered old growth Douglas fir. Alternative E would protect 1,981 acres due to a complete withdrawal from the timber base for wildlife and multiple use reasons. An additional 1,259 acres would have timber management restrictions for the same reasons.
Alternative C, the proposed plan, would allow timber management activities on approximately 11,000 acres of commercial forest land, a majority of which would be in the Douglas fir timber type. All timber management activities would be conducted under guidelines established in the Eastern Idaho Timber Management Environmental Assessment and guidelines specifically set to protect wildlife habitat on pages 37-38 of the Medicine Lodge Draft Resource Management Plan.

Scott Ploger, East Idaho Chapter of the Committee for Idaho's High Desert

Comment #5 Fencing would be adopted as a last resort--is not explained or qualified in any fashion. It seems inconsistent with your recommendations for fencing in other places.

Response: See letter response 7-4

Comment #6 On page 3-15 of the Environmental Impact Statement, a statement that summer and winter moose ranges are in poor condition due to over grazing. I couldn't find any corrective action proposed for that. Maybe I have missed something, but if there isn't any such corrective action, there really should be.

Response: Moose summer and winter ranges will be improved significantly if Alternatives C, D, or E are implemented. On pages B-32 through B-35 (of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP) grazing allotments that had conflicts with these moose ranges were identified and an action that is needed to correct the problem. If these actions are implemented moose habitat should improve through time to the conditions listed on pages F-3 and I-6.

Comment #7 I would expect some criticisms, I'm bothered by the absence of any sort of cost benefit analysis within the document. It would seem that you could at least list an estimated annual budget allocation for combined expenses by alternative, and give the taxpayers some idea of what he is getting on a per dollar basis for each alternative. It doesn't seen to be possible in the document to trace relative cash flows for comparison. For example, if you look at grazing versus fish and wildlife, it would be very helpful to put some pie graphs of bi-alternatives, such that you could make some relative comparisons. I recognize that things like

brush removal are benefiting both grazing and wildlife, but a pie graph does allow some overlap and would be very helpful from the standpoint of clarification.

Response: Benefit/cost analyses of the alternatives is not provided due to the large degree of intangible benefits associated with any land use plan. Benefit/cost analyses of proposed projects will be done prior to installation (See letter response 7-1). Budget estimates are not provided due to the way the BLM's budget system is set up (see letter response 26-4).

Comment #8 Alternative D in the document really doesn't seem to add anything at all. It really seems to be a waste of space as is. In my opinion, that's the single greatest deficiency of the document.

Response: Alternative D as described in the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS is quite similar to Alternative C but presents a partial wilderness alternative. A partial wilderness alternative is needed to provide a reasonable range of alternatives, and to provide analysis of wilderness suitability so that an informed recommendation can be made to the President and Congress. Alternatives need not differ in all respects, such as levels of resource use provided there is a reasonable range of alternatives. (See also response to Comment #2)

Alan Crail, Snake River Audubon Society

Comment #9 A number of places in the plan referred to sagebrush density reduction. The question is, how is this to be implemented?

Response: Under Alternative C, the proposed plan, we are proposing 70,000 acres of brush control on 8.9% of the Resource Area (including the INEL) during the next 20 years. Forty percent of the Resource Area was rated at fair ecological condition, mainly due to excessive sagebrush density. As sagebrush density increases, forage production for livestock and most wildlife species decreases along with a downward trend in ecological condition. Brush control will generally be accomplished by prescribed burning. In areas where burning is undesireable due to soils, lack of fine fuels (grasses) or other resource concerns, then other methods, such as chaining, railing, rotobeating or chemical control (when environmentally acceptable) will be considered. Brush control, within areas to be burned, will be in a mosaic pattern usually consisting of 50 percent of the area. Site specific environmental analysis will be prepared before implementation of any brush control. Due to the mosaic pattern of all brush control efforts the sagebrush ecosystem will be maintained.

Jerry Jayne, Idaho Environmental Council (Written Statement)

Comment #10 This is backwards. The first priority for true multiple-use management of public lands must be the protection of natural systems; soil, watersheds, and ecosystems. Commodities should be produced in observance of that priority; otherwise their production cannot be sustained.

Response: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act Section 102 (a)(8) begins "the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect...". However, this policy section also states "(12) the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timbers, and fiber from the public lands...". We believe "manage" is the key word here rather than "protect".

A major objective of BLM multiple use management is to manage the public lands and resources so that they are used in the combination that will best meet present and future needs under the sustained yield concept.

Comment #11 Another deficiency of all alternatives is the need to rehabilitate fisheries in all streams capable of supporting them. Water quality is only one aspect; fish habitat must be restored by fencing streambanks, constructing pools, etc.

Response: See response for Comment #3

Comment #12 We recommend grazing levels somewhat between actual current levels and the reduced levels under Alternative E (4% reduction short term and 19% reduction long term).

Response: Grazing levels between those stated in Alternative A and Alternative E were considered for analysis under Alternative D. However, a mid-level grazing approach was dropped because of the current satisfactory ecological range condition, the overall high quality of wildlife habitat, and the lack of wildlife-livestock forage conflicts in most of the Resource Area. Those areas having range-related resource problems have been identified under Alternative C and should be mitigated by the proposed range improvements, livestock use adjustments, and implementation of grazing systems.

Comment #13 The EIS contains no economic analysis, stating that one will be done on each project. We suggest that the final EIS give a budget allocation, showing relative funding amounts for grazing and for fish and wildlife.

Response: See letter responses 7-1 and 26-4 and hearing response #7.

Comment #14 We also take exception with the statement (p. 47) that the BLM will define economic efficiency any way they wish. When commodities, such as forage, are extracted from the public lands, some measure of economic efficiency should be observed, in which sale benefits to the government (i.e., the taxpayers) are compared to costs to the government. When commodity extraction is heavily subsidized, it creates a heavier demand for the commodity than if it were not subsidized. This frequently leads to overuse and abuse of the public lands.

Response: Benefit/cost analysis which considers all identifiable social benefits and costs will be performed for all improvements (see letter response 7-1). This means that all the benefits and all the costs, to whomever they accrue (Federal government, users, taxpayers, adjacent landowners, etc.), will be considered in the analysis.

Comment #15 However, more information is needed. How much old growth is in this forested land? Does Alternative E protect most of it? The old growth Douglas fir is very important in terms of plant and animal deversity, and of habitat, more so than it is for timber harvest.

Response: Approximately 1,981 acres of old growth Douglas fir would be withdrawn under Alternative E. An additional 1,260 acres of old growth Douglas fir would have cutting restrictions placed on it due to wildlife concerns but harvest would be allowed.Alternative C, the proposed plan, would allow timber management on approximately 12,000 acres of commercial forest land, 60 percent of which can be considered old growth Douglas fir. Logging practices would be conducted under guidelines established in the Eastern Idaho Timber Management Environmental Assessment and those guidelines listed on pages 37-38 of the Medicine Lodge Draft RMP/EIS. All of which will serve to protect plant and animal diversity.

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APPENDIX

WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT
Proposed Plan

	Management Areas							
	1	2	3	4	5 & 6	7	8	9
A. AUMs of Use								
1. Elk	3,387	198	671	1,165	11,777	0	6,215	2,275
2. Deer	1,112	40	393	800	3,947	0	3,460	649
3. Moose	2,499	20	1,394	747	1,604	0	486	403
4. Antelope	2,241	1,484	514	208	343	108	0	0
5. Whitetail Deer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	958
B. Wildlife Habitat Improvements								
1. Brush Control (acres)	6,525	1,000	600	200	13,140	0	0	0
2. Seeding (acres)	0	780	0	5	0	0	700	0
3. Springs (each)	22	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
4. Wells (each)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Pipeline (miles)	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Reservoirs (each)	8	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
7. Fences (miles)	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0
8. Wildlife Guzzlers (each)	8	8	0	3	4	0	0	0
9. Goose Nest Platforms (each)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
10. Bitterbrush Plantings (acres)	25	0	0	20	80	0	20	100
11. Curl Leaf Mahogany Treatment (acres)	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12. Shelterbelt Plantings	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
13. Aspen Treatment	5	0	0	40	0	0	10	10
C. Management Actions								
1. Designate and manage peregrine prey base (acres).	0	40	0	0	0	0	0	0

MANAGEMENT AREA 1

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Bench	6000	3606	153	4623		M	525	484	525
Canyon	6009	460	443	1272		M	114	114	114
Cole Canyon	6002	4283		46		M	1566	917	1566
Crooked Creek	6004	56060	4116	9694	313	I	6691	5323	6691
Dry Creek	6005	5060		611	33	I	1107	1093	1107
E. Indian Cr.	6006	1364		272		I	250	249	250
E. Ind.Cr.F.S.		1371				I	100	100	100
Edie Creek	6007	16144	711	1360		I	4521	3788	4000
Ellis	6008	1993		510		I	273	251	273
Fritz Creek	6010	209		540		M	25	22	25
Gneiting	6011	610		147		I	80	78	80
Hot Springs	6013	3554				I	268	165	268
Indian Creek	6014	5990	594	1636		M	1136	1071	1136
Indian Creek Butte	6027	440		40		I	86	60	86
Lake Hollow	6015	2136		912		M	501	421	501
Middle Creek	6017	14120	1272	2628		I	4069	2912	3500
Patelzik Creek	6018	6176	664	3435	8	I	1799	1698	1544
Peterson	6028	461		285		M	90	69	90
Rattlesnake Point	6019	323		578		M	100	100	100
Reno Point	6020	1794				I	200	299	299
Three Springs	6021	22709	687	2760		M	2894	2372	2894
Thunder Gulch	6022	5800		864		I	1486	1095	1450
Warm Creek Hills	6023	5967		135		M	1680	1358	1680
Weber Creek	6024	1915		711	11	M	434	433	434
Wright	6001	394		214		M	50	49	50
TOTAL		162939	8640	33273	365		30045	24521	28763

MANAGEMENT AREA 2

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Allotment IV	6046	800				M	79	69	113
Berrett	3001	1449	640	300		I	130	55	75
Bluestem	3008	2941	640	604		I	180	181	180
Buck Springs	6039	2920				M	483	497	483
Camas Butte	6033	23520	1280	1804		I	4341	3515	3600
Cedar Butte	6034	2760				M	500	241	500
Cinder Butte	6040	4095		40		I	588	603	588
Dutch Flat	6030	6324	640	6795		I	448	466	448

MANAGEMENT AREA 2 (continued)

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
East Lake	6041	378				M	36	37	36
Mesa	6043	2193				I	280	280	280
Mickelson	6049	270		640		M	95	94	45
Needle Butte	6035	20344	1110	170		I	2583	2431	2583
North Butte	6031	4622	603	320		I	428	427	428
Oram	3007	1700		114		I	87	98	87
Savage	6044	534		42		M	25	25	25
Southwest	6037	2574				M	545	546	545
Sulfer Lakes	6042	2367				I	375	375	280
Twin Buttes	3000	93820	4371	2552		I	6751	5456	6751
Valley	6036	4677				I	715	927	900
West Dubois	6025	3180	652	4641		I	600	547	600
West Hamer	3006	632				M	18	17	66
TOTAL		182100	9936	18022			19287	16887	18613

MANAGEMENT AREA 3

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Airport	5005	7254	2444	5967		M	1030	987	1030
Antelope Ridge	5000	360		896		M	93	90	93
Beaver Creek	5002	741	1234	2673	329	C	120	103	120
Big L	5004	2280	640	920		M	522	493	522
Blue Bunch	5008	440	1071	2316		C	74	91	74
Button Butte	5010	327	154	225		I	102	102	82
Camss Meadows	5012	3871	757	2375	3	I	570	574	570
Ching Creek	5014	1008	572	1882		M	285	284	285
Cottonwood	5017	76				M	26	30	26
Dubois	5023	3302		2605		M	620	288	620
East Beaver	5077	640	446	1905	78	M	333	316	213
East Dubois	5025	1640	2824	2177		M	231	342	462
Eighteen Mile	5026	859	2341	2625		C	234	240	234
Experiment Stn	5028	3467	1282	2735		M	520	519	520
Gardner Lake	5030	320	924	1670		C	39	39	39
High Bridge	5033	2081	534	4973		M	465	443	465
Hump Ditch	5034	1364	1199	1536		M	631	450	455
Hump Lake	5074	460		801		M	84	84	84
Jacoby Ranch	5036	698	236	6823		C	148	123	148
Junction	5038	425		874		M	48	35	48
Morgans Crater	5040	1043	2443	2434		C	186	158	186
Needle Grass	5044	2439		314		M	450	450	450

MANAGEMENT AREA 3 (continued)

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
North Well	5045	2185		40		I	196	237	196
Obsidian	5046	2453		1275		I	386	384	386
Radar Hill	5075	40	1319	473		C	6	6	6
Railroad	5080	4927	642	4113		M	572	525	572
Rattlesnake	5073	640	76	2343		M	254	245	160
Smith	5056	240		773		M	30	30	30
Spencer	5059	1346	833	953	204	M	378	330	338
Three Mile	5062	808	341	385	14	M	190	193	190
Twenty-Two	5063	40	730	196		C	13	0	13
West Crater Butte	5065	640	636	320		M	166	42	166
West Well	5067	1446		80		M	270	176	270
Wood	5050	160		840		C	13	13	13
TOTAL		50017	23678	60517	628		9285	8422	9066

MANAGEMENT AREA 4

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Aitken, J.E.	4001	200				M	54	55	54
Beard, James	4026	119.19				M	30	30	30
Bramwell, K.	4047	280				I	87	77	56
Browning, G.	4052	40				M	16	16	16
Carlson, L.	4061	80				I	25	25	16
Cherry	5089	240				M	24	5	24
Clements, G.R.	4081	80				M	11	11	11
Clements, G.W.	4080	1837.38				M	409	409	409
Cook, Adrian	4085	280				C	63	63	63
Cow Camp	5196	120				C	80	80	80
Croft	3010	1424		803		I	68	66	68
Davis, Wayne	4102	56				C	19	19	19
Dietrich, P.	4106	40				M	10	10	10
Enget, Wm.	4118	80				M	20	20	20
Fall River	5007	29.28				M	7	7	7
Gay, Walter	4132	40				M	8	8	8
Green, David	4138	800				I	134	134	134
Grover, Archie	4140	944.10				M	252	204	252
Grube, Owen	4141	80				M	10	10	10
Harris, M.A.	4155	40				M	6	6	6
Henry's Fork	5090	40		162		M	8	9	8
Heuer, Lafaye	4193	193.46				M	36	0	36
Highway	5011	160		80		M	54	54	54
Hill, Ralph	4171	120				M	16	16	16

MANAGEMENT AREA 4 (continued)

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRIVATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREFERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Hittson, Ward	4323	90.40				M	181	110	30
Jenaen, C.	4184	40				M	10	10	10
Judy, Doyle	4418	40				M	10	10	10
Kaufman, Al	4234	80				I	53	42	26
Kettle Butte	3004	2233		1040		I	279	282	279
Laird, Phyllis	4224	350				M	85	66	85
Last Chance	5040	349		2991	329	C	181	172	181
Lewiea, H.	4230	86				M	10	10	10
Little, W.	4235	840				M	215	113	215
Mickelaen, L.	4263	39.51				M	13	13	13
Mickelaen, R.	4264	1453.3				M	529	529	529
Parker, Leo	4294	40				M	5	5	5
Potpourri Rnch	4298	40				M	7	7	7
Potter Ent.	4299	79.52				C	10	10	10
Potter, Travis	4300	35.33				M	16	16	16
Rasmussen, O.	4311	80.43				M	27	27	27
Rigby, Rosa	4234	80				I	53	53	26
Riveraide	5051	126.31		1815		C	42	43	42
Salisbury Corp	4339	175.10				M	59	59	59
Saurey, Keith	4332	119.90				M	24	24	24
Steinke, E.J.	4205	40.64				M	16	16	16
Tilt-Bancroft	4114	148.55				M	38	38	38
Victor	4301	3560				I	816	425	405
Walker, D.	4391	200				M	62	62	62
Walker, Wm.	4392	313.61				M	97	89	97
Webster, Lola	4398	286.15				M	96	96	96
Weeks Bros.	4400	69.39				M	17	17	17
Winsper	6001	80		240		M	20	14	20
Zohner, Gary	4417	280				M	51	51	51
TOTAL		18,880		7131	329		4469	3743	3813

MANAGEMENT AREA 5

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRIVATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREFERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Antelope Valley	5001	2042	8273	4174		C	310	304	310
Big Grasay	5033	2240	548	1641		I	416	331	416
Big Sage	5006	758	1804	309		M	108	106	108
Blue Creek	5009	1077		3071		I	372	351	269
Butte Canal	5177	11510	640	215		M	859	1135	1135
Box Canyon	5079	3219		312		M	340	265	340

MANAGEMENT AREA 5 (continued)

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Checkerboard	5013	3033	2667			I	358	297	358
Chokecherry	5015	1891	2424			M	533	410	533
Cool Creek	5016	575		1522		I	80	80	80
Crooked Road	5019	3223	5342	80		I	539	283	539
Crystal Butte	5021	1004	360	3755		C	256	100	256
Davis Lakes Land & Livestock	4101	80				M	13	13	13
Dry Lakes	5024	4048	4650	1367		I	692	502	692
East Grassy Ridge	5197	1044		613		M	155	127	155
E. Willow Cr.	5069	134				I	30	6	30
Elkhorn	5027	7598	3780	2008		I	704	733	704
Ferguson, R.	4037	400				M	100	100	100
Five Monuments	5085	3044	6672	435		I	376	207	376
Fogg Butte	5029	1340	640	1556		I	289	288	289
Gas Caves	5031	3283	1576			M	555	415	555
Gerber	5182	1248	640	1016		M	282	286	282
Grassy Ridge	5176	2488	1269	4467		M	399	374	399
Grassy Road	5032	866	460	2813		M	74	74	87
Grover	5200	80		122		I	7	5	5
Horsebrush	5186	4796		188		M	875	637	875
House	6045	1070		148		I	72	73	72
Ice Caves	5035	2478	1706	40		I	326	172	326
Island Park	4011	244				M	61	62	61
Jenkins Well	5037	1696	238	1804		I	325	328	325
Laird, Ab	4223	440				M	73	73	73
Laird, Phyllis	4224	160				M	39	66	39
Lava East Camas	5041	8566	8024	2195		M	1385	627	1385
Lucky Strike	5042	134	2317	3013		C	30	32	30
McCrea, A.	4248	240				M	40	24	40
Menan Butte	5175	4740		161		I	466	919	790
Meyers	5184	4894		109		M	805	820	805
9 Mile Knoll	5181	11182	600	1730		I	1275	1232	1275
North Hawgood	5189	5675	290	186		M	543	476	630
Park	5195	384	96			M	53	59	53
Pine Butte	5047	10087	6619	6341		I	1896	2070	1896
Pine Canyon	5048	320		80		M	100	0	100
Pine Creek	5049	1176		1095		M	164	147	164
Plano	5187	3792		2		I	305	253	400
Quaylea	5185	193				M	30	18	30
Red Road	5081	2178	1804	757		M	363	339	363

MANAGEMENT AREA 5 (continued)

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Rigby	5194	2775	640	3021		M	174	208	230
Rudd Well	5052	2107		5183		M	676	506	676
Sage Junction	5178	4876	238	865		M	385	131	385
Sand Creek	5053	1995	664	461		M	430	610	550
Sandy Butte	5054	5978	2199	903		I	1318	1289	1318
Saurey	5091	1638		366		I	241	242	241
Sheridan	5055	1367	3828	1977		C	450	409	450
Shotgun Valley	4142	5336		869		I	1344	1168	1344
Snowshoe Butte	5057	1080	1078	727		I	228	190	228
S. Hawgood	5188	8239	640	300		I	592	518	592
Split Butte	5082	40	158	840		C	46	4	10
Spring Creek	5060	513		651		M	200	197	103
Swensona Knoll	5061	458	870	2141		C	133	145	133
3 Mile Butte	5083	2898	4089	3232		I	972	971	972
Two Counties	5064	3150	6987	419		M	972	861	972
W.E. Farms	4370	320				M	79	79	79
W. Rattlesnake	5072	1278		853		I	223	123	223
W. Willow Cr.	5070	450				I	20	0	20
White Sands	5068	4742	2275	979		M	1328	900	1328
TOTAL		169910	87015	71112			26884	23770	27617

MANAGEMENT AREA 6

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Egin Lakes	5084	2533				I	297	262	297
Junipera	5039	16888	686	7871		C	480	344	480
West Ridge	5066	1099	640	2857		M	429	409	220
TOTAL		20520	1326	10728			1206	1015	997

MANAGEMENT AREA 7

Twin Buttes-INEL	3000				180419	I	7313	5911	7313

MANAGEMENT AREA 8

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Andrus, H.	4009	160				M	27	21	27
Croft, J.	4098	120				M	48	48	30
Elkington, K.	4116	200				M	54	54	50
Loertscher, D.	4237	1851.32				M	512	512	463
Lowe, Wm.	4245	160				M	54	54	54
McDaniel, Z.	4249	160				M	36	36	36

MANAGEMENT AREA 8 (continued)

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Nielson, B.	4281	1048				M	233	140	233
Quarter Circle	4304	1825.06				M	322	318	322
Rockwood, M&C	4333	120				M	24	24	24
Sundown Corp.	4373	200				I	67	67	50
Tex Creek CMA		2900							
Thompson-Schweider	4150	1411.62				M	371	372	371
Wilcox Bros.	4406	440				M	160	160	110
Winther, T.S.	4411	80				M	27	27	20
TOTAL		10676					1935	1833	1790

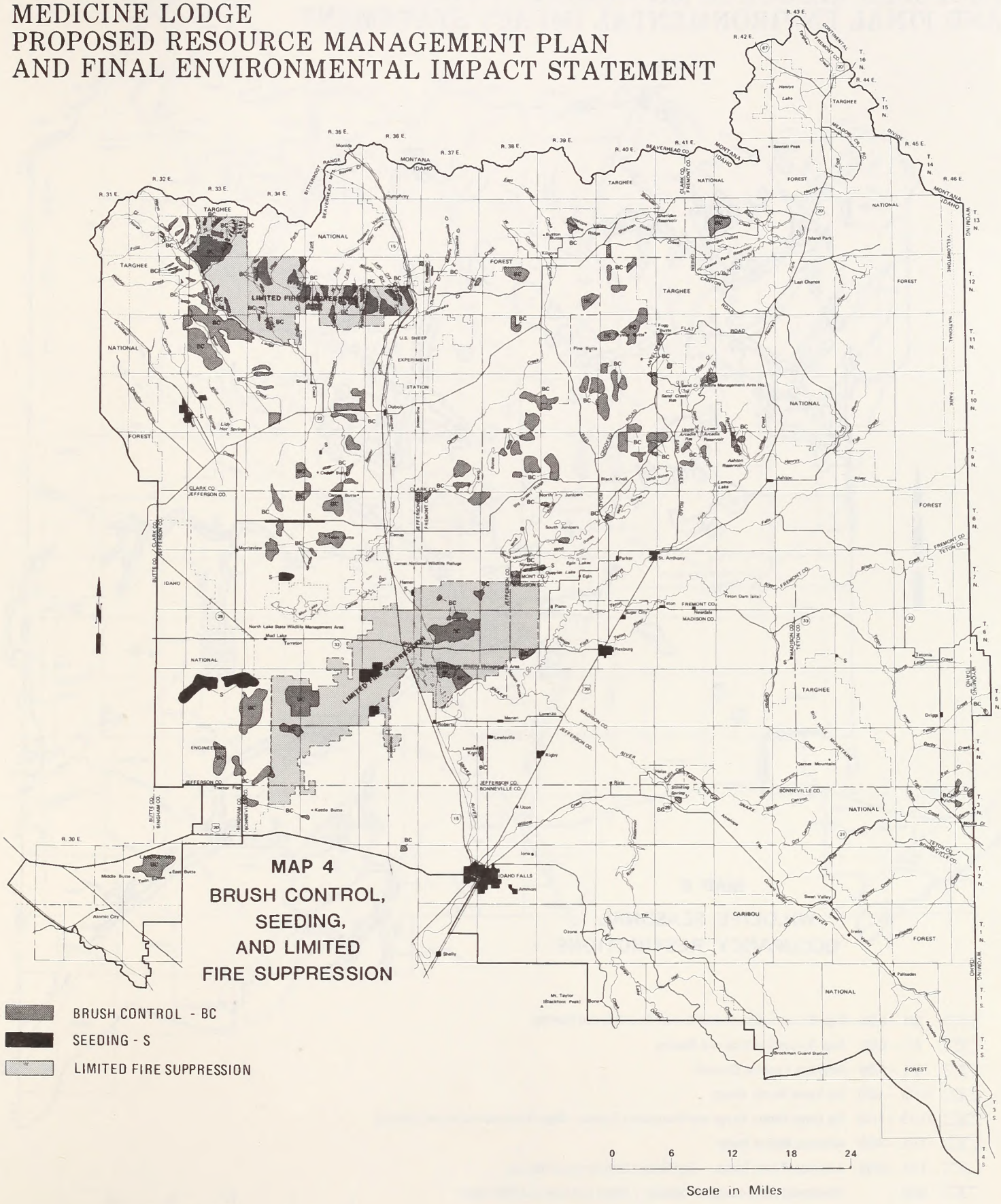
MANAGEMENT AREA 9

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
Allred Bros.	4003	61.59				M	13	13	13
Aahment, T.	4010	80				M	14	14	14
Barber, Kent	4017	210.14				I	70	70	70
Beam, Francis	4024	120				M	20	20	20
Birch, Lowell	4032	11.86				M	8	8	8
Bitton, H.W.	4144	200				M	50	50	50
Blakely, B.	4042	135				M	92	92	92
Blakely, D.	4039	667.10				M	122	117	122
Blakely, L.	4040	94.66				M	95	95	95
Brown, Donal	4049	49				M	9	9	9
Brown, D. & P.	4374	289.29				I	116	116	72
Clark, C.	4076	358.78				I	72	72	72
Fama Dairy	4288	839.17				I	210	210	210
Fisher	5180	53.04				M	60	60	30
Fleming, J.	4126	182.29				M	41	41	41
Gallup, Gerald	4130	155.07				M	32	12	32
Harrop, Larry	4158	77.63				I	16	16	16
Harrop, Robert	4159	51.36				I	10	10	10
Hayes, J.R.	4020	51.24				M	19	19	19
Heise Hot Spr.	4166	539.90				M	90	90	90
Hill, William	4170	43.72				I	9	9	9
Holden, Wm.	4175	40				M	5	5	5
Horman, Lowell	4271	9				M	2	2	2
Jacobson, L.	4197	16				M	5	9	5
Kremer, B.	4221	38				M	8	8	8
L-Bar Acres	4050	9.69				I	3	3	3
Lundquist, J.L.	4247	195				I	37	37	37

ALLOTMENT NAME	ALLOT #	ACRES BLM	STATE	PRI-VATE	OTHER	MGMT. STATUS	ACTIVE PREF-ERENCE AUMS	5 YEAR AVE. AUMS	INITIAL STOCKING AUMS
McDowell, D.	4410	64.05				M	26	26	26
Newby, M.	4279	242.13				M	49	49	49
Radford, Blain	4306	22				M	3	3	3
Reed, Gale	4270	59.40				M	20	20	20
Rhodes, Gary	4318	28.05				M	6	6	6
Rhodes, S.& M.	4319	263.53				M	53	53	53
Riverbottom	5183	240				I	150	0	80
Robertson	5193	15.82				I	3	3	3
Robison, L.&S.	4331	209.92				I	42	42	42
Roth, T.	4337	55.27				I	11	11	11
Rudd	5192	126		450		M	23	23	23
Stinking Springs	4041	3520				I	939	453	704
Stoltenburg	4367	330				I	83	83	83
Suitter, D.	4372	40				M	10	10	10
Sykes, Floyd	4013	16.35				M	8	8	8
Taylor, Lyle	4376	80				I	11	11	11
Thomchak, L.	4385	40.84				M	9	9	9
Walker, G.	4390	93.38				M	120	120	120
Weeks, Jess & Son	4401	120				I	24	24	24
Weeks, Thell	4399	135				M	28	28	28
Zitlau, Carl	4416	52.39				M	11	11	11
TOTAL		10332.66		450			2857	2200	2478
TOTAL - RESOURCE AREA							103281	88302	100449

* 38% was unclassified as there were no site descriptions available for the river system.

MEDICINE LODGE
PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



MEDICINE LODGE
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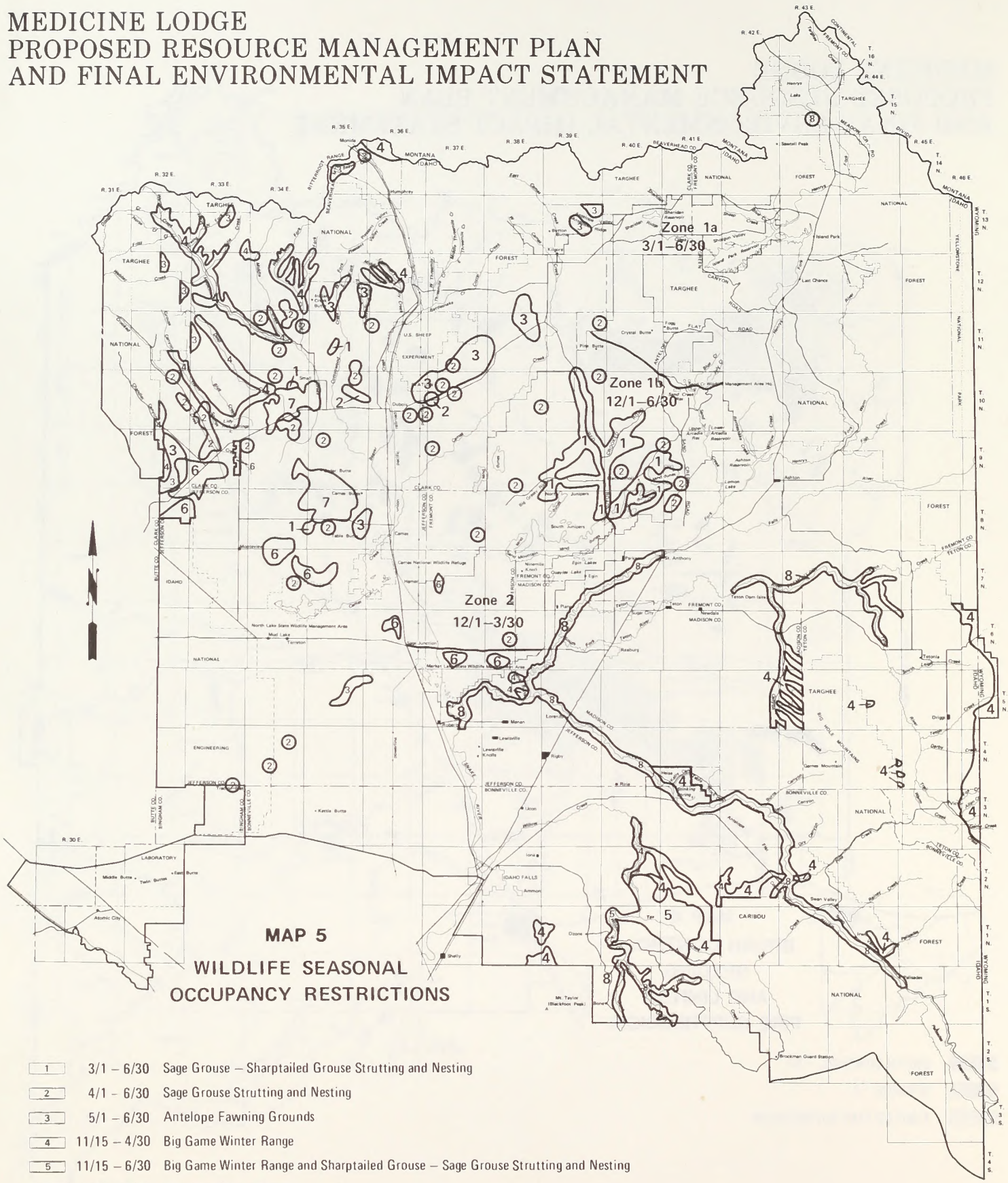
AND FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



1	3/1 – 6/30	Sage Grouse – Sharptailed Grouse Strutting and Nesting
2	4/1 – 6/30	Sage Grouse Strutting and Nesting
3	5/1 – 6/30	Antelope Fawning Grounds
4	11/15 – 4/30	Big Game Winter Range
5	11/15 – 6/30	Big Game Winter Range and Sharptailed Grouse – Sage Grouse Strutting and Nesting
6	12/1 – 3/30	Antelope Winter Range
7	12/1 – 6/30	Antelope Winter Range – Sage Grouse Strutting and Nesting
8	NSO	Threatened and Endangered Species – Major Fisheries and Waterways
		Sands Habitat Management Plan (HMP) Boundary

0 6 12 18 24

Scale in Miles

*U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1985-0-593-051/25,000

VER'S CARD

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proposed
gement plan

	OFFICE	DATE RETURNED

(Continued on reverse)

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Medicine Lodge proposed
resource management plan

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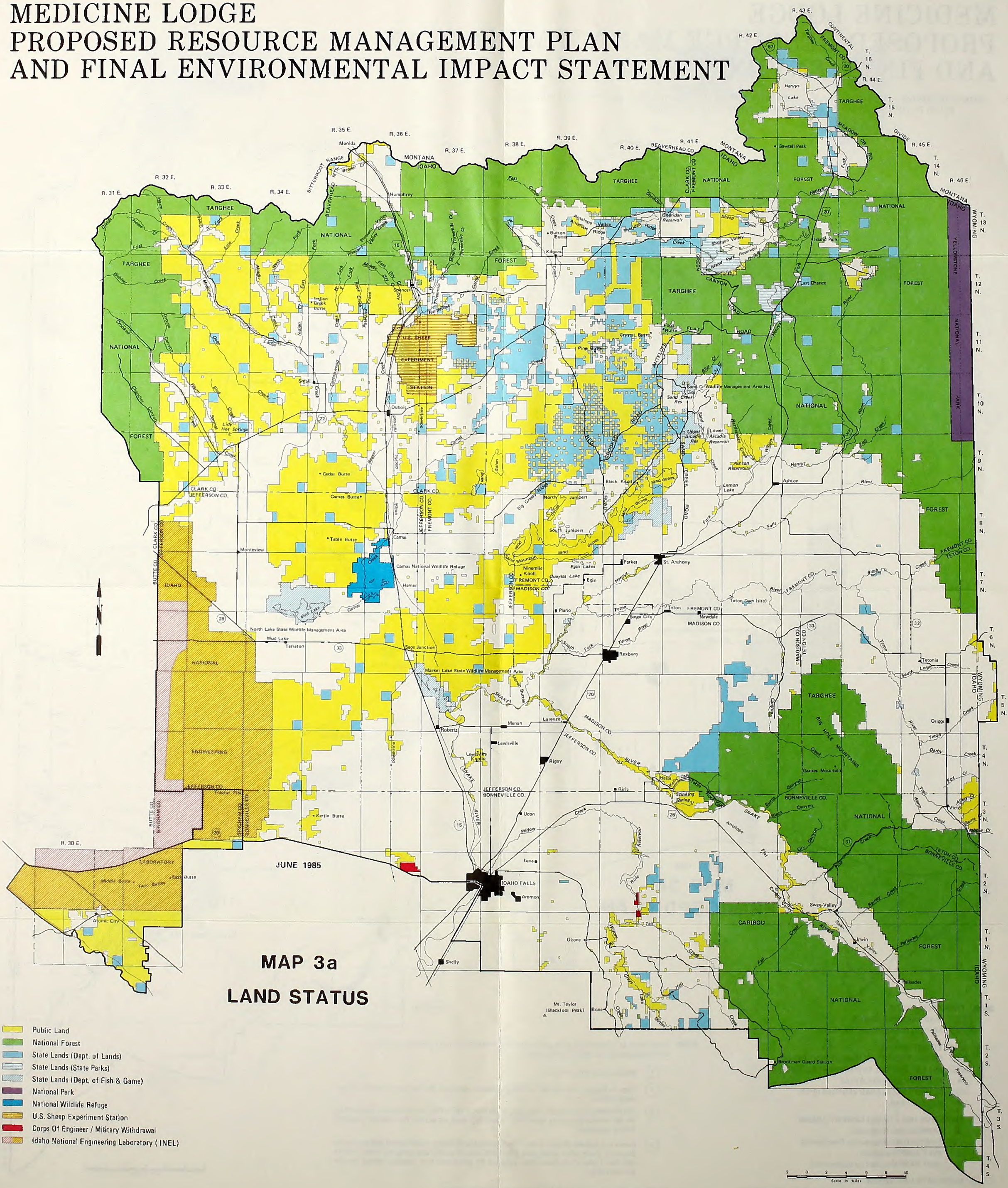


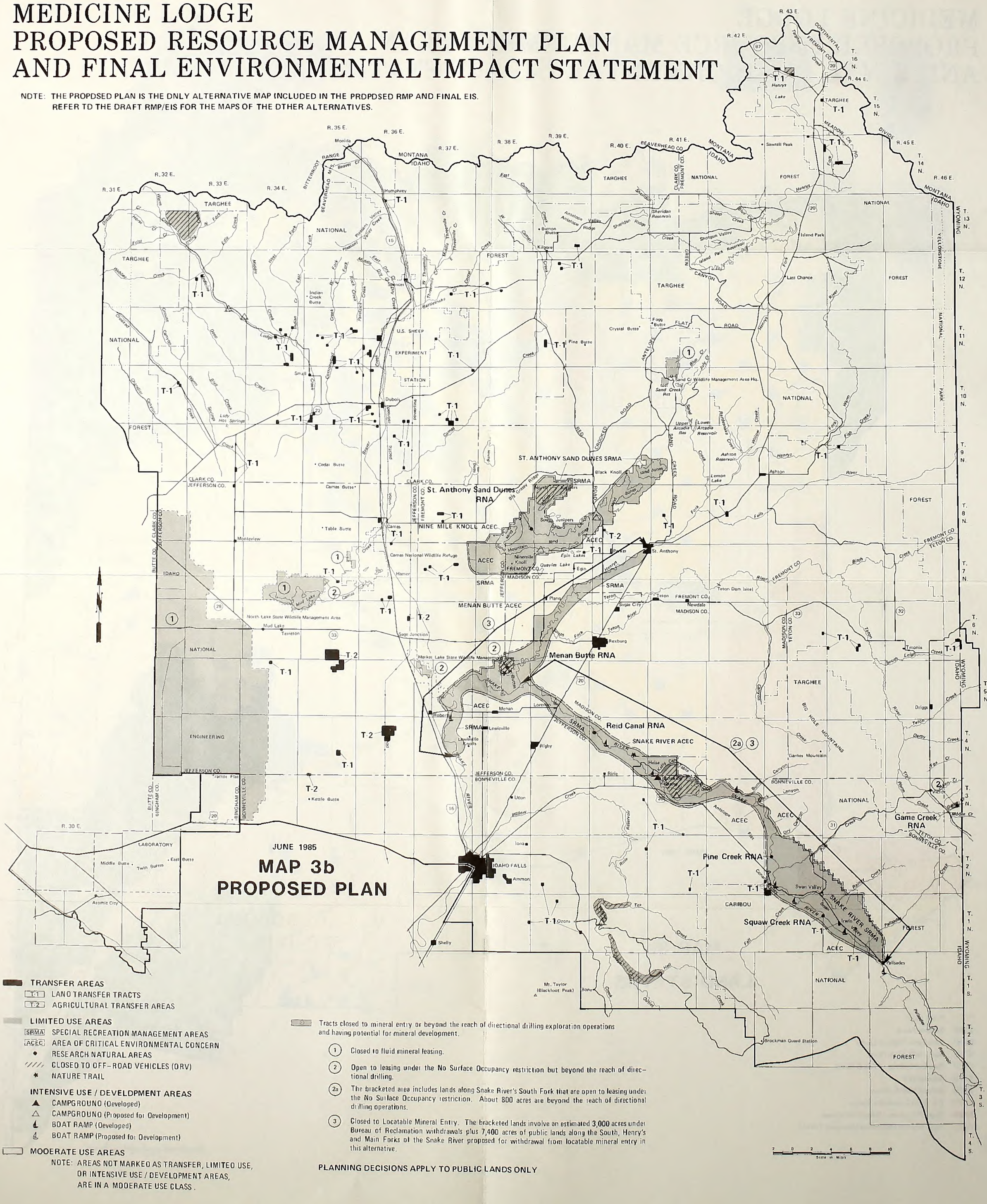
JUNE 1985

MAP 3a
LAND STATUS

- Public Land
- National Forest
- State Lands (Dept. of Lands)
- State Lands (State Parks)
- State Lands (Dept. of Fish & Game)
- National Park
- National Wildlife Refuge
- U.S. Sheep Experiment Station
- Corps Of Engineer / Military Withdrawal
- Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL)

MEDICINE LODGE
PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

NOTE: THE PROPOSED PLAN IS THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE MAP INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED RMP AND FINAL EIS. REFER TO THE DRAFT RMP/EIS FOR THE MAPS OF THE OTHER ALTERNATIVES.



JUNE 1985

MAP 3b
PROPOSED PLAN

TRANSFER AREAS
- T-1 LAND TRANSFER TRACTS
- T-2 AGRICULTURAL TRANSFER AREAS

LIMITED USE AREAS
- SRMA SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS
- ACEC AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN
- • RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS
- //// CLOSED TO OFF-ROAD VEHICLES (ORV)
- * NATURE TRAIL

INTENSIVE USE / DEVELOPMENT AREAS
- ▲ CAMPGROUND (Developed)
- △ CAMPGROUND (Proposed for Development)
- BOAT RAMP (Developed)
- BOAT RAMP (Proposed for Development)

MODERATE USE AREAS

NOTE: AREAS NOT MARKED AS TRANSFER, LIMITED USE, OR INTENSIVE USE / DEVELOPMENT AREAS, ARE IN A MODERATE USE CLASS.

Tracts closed to mineral entry or beyond the reach of directional drilling exploration operations and having potential for mineral development.

(1) Closed to fluid mineral leasing.

(2) Open to leasing under the No Surface Occupancy restriction but beyond the reach of directional drilling.

(2a) The bracketed area includes lands along Snake River's South Fork that are open to leasing under the No Surface Occupancy restriction. About 800 acres are beyond the reach of directional drilling operations.

(3) Closed to Locatable Mineral Entry. The bracketed lands involve an estimated 3,000 acres under Bureau of Reclamation withdrawals plus 7,400 acres of public lands along the South, Henry's and Main Forks of the Snake River proposed for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry in this alternative.

PLANNING DECISIONS APPLY TO PUBLIC LANDS ONLY